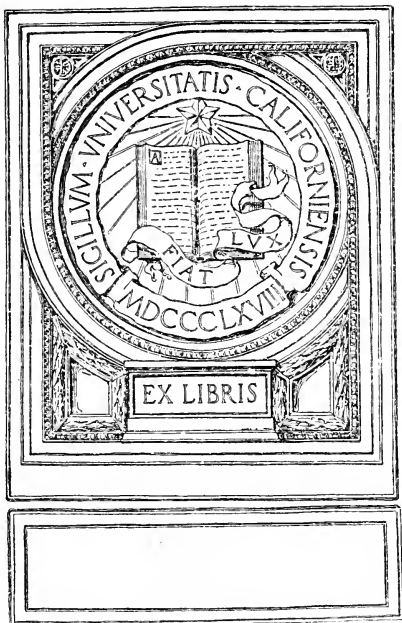


A LEGEND OF
THE TROSBACKS
AND OTHER POEMS
BY WILLIAM MILLER





LOCH KATRINE.
Imagination ne'er could reach
Or paint to life this pebbly beach.

A LEGEND OF THE TROSSACHS AND OTHER POEMS

By WILLIAM MILLER

"The truth of truths is love"

P. J. BAILEY



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DEDICATED TO ONE WHO
HAS GIVEN ME THIRTY
YEARS OF DEVOTED LOVE
AND SYMPATHY; WHO HAS
REJOICED WITH ME IN MY
DAYS OF GLADNESS, GRIEVED
WITH ME IN MY HOURS OF
SORROW, AND BUT FOR
WHOSE KINDLY ENCOURAGE-
MENT THESE VERSES MIGHT
NEVER HAVE BEEN PENNED:

My Wife

L'ENVOY

The Muse I've lo'ed for many years
In sun and shade, in storm and calm,
Tho' wooing her, oft-times in tears,
Those tears I forthwith here embalm.

The joy, the peace, the lasting good
To me and mine, I scarce can tell,
And yet perchance there may be food
For others too—if so, 'tis well.

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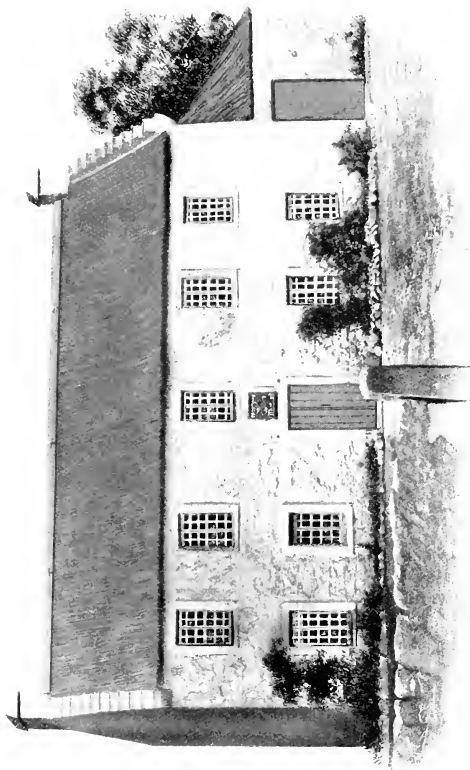
I

DESCRIPTIVE AND REMINISCENT

TORBREX HOUSE

In the poem "Memories of the Past" (page 10) is recorded a probable incident in the life of Prince Charles Edward Stewart, which has hitherto been unpublished.

Torbrex House, as shown in the illustration, was the residence of Mrs John Walkinshaw (more generally known as Lady Barrowfield), the daughter of Sir Hugh Paterson of Bannockburn House. Prince Charles Edward Stewart stayed in Bannockburn House when in the Stirling district during the Rebellion of 1745-6. From enquiries which I have made, I conclude that Lady Barrowfield came to reside in Torbrex House as a tenant after she left Glasgow during 1734 or later. A Deed of disposition and assignation of Torbrex House was made in favour of Lady Barrowfield by Hugh Seaton, Esqr., of Touch, in 1767, and she continued to reside there until 1779, when she removed to Edinburgh, dying the following year at the advanced age of 97. John Walkinshaw was taken prisoner at the Battle of Sheriffmuir in 1715, and confined in Stirling Castle. His wife (Lady Barrowfield) succeeded in getting a private interview with him in his cell, where they changed clothes. Escaping to France, he later entered the service of the Old Pretender. His wife followed, and they resided in Rome for several years, and there Clementina (the youngest of ten daughters) was born in 1720, the same year in which the Prince was born. John Walkinshaw's estate was confiscated, but part of it later on was restored in the interests of his wife and children. Ultimately he was pardoned, and returned to Glasgow, where he died in 1731. When Prince Charles Edward came back to Scotland to claim his own in '45, he again met Clementina, the friend of his childhood, who was residing with her uncle, Sir Hugh Paterson, in Bannockburn House (a short distance from Torbrex House). In all probability Prince Charles Edward was a frequent visitor at Torbrex, being on terms of friendship with Lady Barrowfield, owing to the fact of her late husband having been so long in the service of the Old Pretender. It was common knowledge amongst the old villagers when I was a boy, that the Prince slept a night in this house, and it is rather interesting to note that the various historians who have recorded where he passed each night from the time of his arrival in this country, up to the date of the Battle of Culloden, are uncertain as to where he slept on the 1st February, 1746. On the morning of the 2nd February, when the army was retreating to the North, a small party of horsemen arrived in the village of Doune and enquired of three old men which way the army had marched. One of the old men recognised the Prince as being of the party, and they all had the appearance of having come a considerable distance. We are fairly justified in concluding from the above facts, that it was in this house that he passed the night of the 1st February, 1746.



TORBREX HOUSE.

And near his house there dwelt of old The Lady Barrowfield.

A LEGEND OF THE TROSSACHS

LURED by romance at eventide,
I strayed by dark Loch Achray's side,
Where erst was heard the claymore's clang,
O'er hill and dale the slogan rang.

In bygone days the fiery cross
Would rouse from every glen and moss
The vassals of the chieftain brave;
His cause was theirs, to die or save:
Hence comes the valour of our men,
Who fight to-day from Highland glen.

Calm as the loch, a peace serene
Reigned all around where strife had been;
In tranquil mind I wandered on
And thought it well those days were gone,
When tribal feuds had tinged with gore
The waves that wash the rugged shore.

The broad claymore lies in its sheath,
The targe is buried 'mong the heath,
Or decks the ancient chieftain's hall
Or humble cottar's shieling wall.

The prickly gorse with golden plume,
And pale primroses' early bloom
Illumine all the mountain steep,
And lull the timid deer to sleep;
While far o'erhead, on pinions strong,
The skylark pours his evening song,

A LEGEND OF THE TROSSACHS

And humming home, the laden bee,
On wearied wing, makes melody.

I paused, enraptured with the scene,
'Mong changing tints of vernal sheen,
When ah! I spied, as peering through
The leafy shade now wet with dew,
A sylvan nook, where flowing stream
Glides silently, as in a dream,
With great Ben An and Ben Venue
Grim sentinels to guard the view;
On either side of this defile,
Like pillars in a cloistered aisle,
Their giant shadows come and go,
And play upon the stream below.

And was it here, is this the place
The Wizard saw fair Ellen's face?
Or on the shore near by the isle,
Away from here a Highland mile,
Beside the strand, the silver line,
A beauty spot, where fairies dine?
Imagination ne'er could reach
Or paint to life this pebbly beach
That shines and shimmers in the sun
Like maiden's face when she is won.

The legend tells, in ages past
Two maidens met, their lots to cast,
Straight from their matin prayer and hymn;
The grey mist on the mountain grim
Look'd down to frown: they heeded not,
But went as if it were their lot
An ancient freit in faith to test,
To set their doubting hearts at rest;

A LEGEND OF THE TROSSACHS

They hurried on, for weal or woe,
With flashing eyes and cheeks aglow,
And picked four pebbles from the strand,
While, each with one in either hand,
From craggy rock near Ellen's Isle,
And with a half-despairing smile,
They dropped them in with gentle throw,
Then gazed with eager eyes to know
If they would keep each other's side,
Till down beneath the surging tide
They found a bed, each by its mate,
Thus stand as omen of their fate.

Alas! alas! this fatal day
One of the pairs went far astray!
The hapless maid in anguish stood,
Recalled the past in fretful mood,
Smote on her breast and sighed to feel
She thus had tried her fate to seal;
Then, panting, stared with maniac gaze
Upon the waters' mocking maze;
She wrung her hands, and tore her hair,
And in a frenzy of despair
Leap'd from the rock with frantic yell,
And sank beneath the waters' swell.

Dark were her locks, and white her brow,
Beloved was she by Donald Gow,
Who once had vowed beside this strand
That he would wed no other hand;
Now high above, 'mong rocks and fern—
To climb the crags all sportsmen yearn—
There Donald had a-hunting been,
And from his vantage ground had seen
His loved one in her perilous plight;
His brave heart quivered at the sight,

A LEGEND OF THE TROSSACHS

And rushing through the copsewood wild,
He reached the rock—"My love, my child!"—
A moment paused, then bounded in,
The waters splashed like roaring linn,
As down he dived to where she lay,
Still as the night when opes the day;
Then clutching firm the slender waist,
He reached the bank in frenzied haste,
Like warrior rushing to the fray
When all he knows is to obey.

Thus breathless to the rock he bore,
And prostrate on the pebbly shore
He gently laid the dripping form;
And, as the calm precedes the storm—
His heaving breast was like to burst—
He tried to hope, yet feared the worst;
Alas! he saw the life had fled,
His great heart throbbed: for she was dead,
Then, stooping, kissed her peerless brow,
To him the world was empty now.
The grassy sward and granite rock,
Responsive, seemed to share the shock;
With aching heart and tender zest
He longed to clasp her to his breast—
But it must be in yonderland—
And, trembling, dropped her snow-white hand;
"I come! O God! my soul is riven,"
He cried, with hungry look to Heaven,
And, stagg'ring, fell, close by her side,
A broken heart, a drownéd bride.

In silence, 'neath a boulder stone
Near yonder oak, they sleep, alone;
But peering through the velvet sward
A bunch of cranberries keep guard,

A LEGEND OF THE TROSSACHS

And o'er the stone the lichen moss
Has grown, as if in grief, a cross.
Around the grave there spreads the thyme
Whose fragrance makes the harebell chime,
As shaking on its slender stem
It waves a silent requiem.

Go, list, 'tis said, when winds are high,
Or when the twilight shades draw nigh,
The eerie sigh of nymphs you'll hear
Like weird, sad wail attunes the ear;
And lo! you may two lovers see
Renew their vow beneath the tree,
And fairies flitting out and in
Among the weeping-birch and whin,
The while the lapping waters lave,
With sweetest music kiss the grave.

MEMORIES OF THE PAST

WHEN I repair at eventide to muse on days gone by,
A vision comes before my sight I fain would gratify,
And tell to all, who care to read, the deeds of love and
truth

From out the book of memory, the school book of my
youth.

Some pages may be lost to view and buried past my ken,
While some are marked and underlined to me with
valiant men;

And though my hair be turning grey, my brow be
furrowed deep,

The deeds of those I now record can never fall asleep;
Poor in the wealth the worldling knows, their minds
were rich in lore,

When dealing with their fellows they were honest to
the core.

Historic scenes crowd on my mind, come down from
sire to son,

How Bruce had fought for liberty and Scotland's
freedom won;

For where the famous Bannock Burn meanders to the
sea,

The gallant Bruce took up his stand to set his country
free.

A vile usurper came to crush, enslave our noble land,
But Bruce was there to reckon with and check the foul
demand.

De Bohun had thought to end the strife, and challenged
him to fight,

Bruce waved his battle-axe on high, and spurred his
palfrey light;

They met, De Bohun's fierce charger plunged, Bruce
promptly shied the thrust,
When crash! a blow like lightning laid the braggart
in the dust.

"Thus perish all who reckon not the prowess of a Scot,
If we have been in chains for years, this day removes
the blot.

Be valiant, Scots, keep arm to arm, and close up thigh
to thigh,

And rush when slogan shout you hear, to crush the
foe or die."

And ere the swelt'ring sun had set o'er fields and
meadows green,

The foe was scattered far and wide as they had never
been.

The growth of friendship then began that ended
Scotland's woe,

By land or sea we now agree to meet the common foe.

Near by the way brave Randolph marched, anew to
deck his brow

With chaplet, Bruce declared he'd lost, there stands a
village now.

And there, within that hamlet snug a-nestling in the plain,
I often frolicked as a boy (would I were one again!).

A cosy home, with thatch on roof and flowers before
the door,

Where woodbine twined to shade the light that shone
upon the floor;

There father drove the shuttle swift while weaving
tartans fine,

And mother toiled to fill the pirns in days o' auld lang
syne.

Though scanty were the earnings, yet contentment
reigned around—

O that such love and harmony in every home were
found!—

And so within this lowly home one hopeful month of
May

The writer of this retrospect first saw the light of day.
And now, O mother, fondest love! dost thou remember
when

I clean upset thy wheel and pirns? my first deep grief
was then.

The time had come I should receive my usual afternoon,
But no, thine edict had decreed "that a' the milk was
dune."

This episode in early life sets my old heart aglow,
Such wisdom taught me when to speak, and when I
should say "No."

Here would I pause to linger on those happy youthful
days,

And when my sister Nell and I went skelping o'er the
braes,

Or guddled minnows in the burn, or chased the busy
bee,

Or when I trembling stood and watched her climb the
auld haw tree.

Throughout those days of innocence the home was filled
with joy,

The patt'ring feet, the merry laugh, all pleasant, sweet,
and coy;

Six little ones at close of day, including Nell and me,
Would clasp their hands and pray to God beside their
mother's knee:

"The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want. He makes
me down to lie

In pastures green: He leadeth me the quiet waters by."

The Omnipresent heard the prayer, and bore the
parents' load,

Divine the faith that looks in hope and verity to God.

But lo! there's one whose voice is still, that shared our
 youthful joy,
 Now slumbering 'neath the churchyard green, her soul
 without alloy;
 Rejoicing now in other spheres beyond life's troubled
 sea,
 There sheltered from all stormy winds, from disputa-
 tions free.

But faces change with changing time, old scenes give
 place to new,
 The village weavers one by one pass oft before my view.
 I've watched lang Jamie, gun in hand, protect his
 cherries ripe,
 Cowerin' 'neath a berry bush, starlings and blackbirds
 snipe;
 The boys oft hid behind the hedge, and just as he
 took aim
 Would clap their hands—off flew the birds, and Jamie
 lost his game.
 He'd angry stride o'er tattie shaws or cabbages between,
 Declaring he would shoot the crew, but not a boy was
 seen.
 But Jamie was a worthy man; in winter, by the fire,
 He built beeskeps wi' eident hand, and laces made of
 briar.

Old John, "the laird," with gleeful face, and wrinkles
 on his brow—
 Behold him in his garden trim—methinks I see him
 now,
 As by his side he led me forth to view the Wallace
 Tower,
 And showed me life and beauty in each tiny leaf and
 flower.

His eye was bright, his step was firm, tho' agéd
 eighty-four,
 Yet after this he crossed the deep, and died in Balti-
 more.
 His grandsire for Prince Charlie's cause fell on
 Culloden Moor,
 And John, all for the Stewart race, regretted he was
 poor.
 And near his house there dwelt of old the Lady
 Barrowfield,*
 And there the Prince had oft repaired by shade of night
 concealed.
 This lady graced his father's court, exiled in Rome
 for years,
 And rank and fortune sacrificed with lonely widow's
 tears;
 Yet still the favoured cause she deemed a just and
 righteous claim,
 And thus he was a welcome guest, a prince of honoured
 name.
 Ten daughters had this lady fair, ten comely maids
 I ween,
 In all the country side around none fairer could be seen.
 And one, the charmer of his life, the youngest of the ten,
 Might pardoned be although she loved this gallant
 among men.
 Had they not romped as children romp the royal
 walks along,
 And made the corridors resound with childish glee and
 song?
 The gentle flame rekindled when the royal lover came.
 In princely hall or peasant's cot the sequel is the same.
 The mansion stands, the room is shown where love was
 wont to peep,
 The corner where the settle stood where oft he lay in
 sleep,

*See note on page xvi.

We mourn poor Clementina's fate, who loved as loves
a wife;

Devotion is a mockery when paid for with a life,
Perchance had he but gained the crown—who knows
what might have been?

Yet Nature gave what man denied, for she was aye a
Queen.

And thus old John, with flashing eye, instructed me
of yore,

With stories of the "Forty-Five" from out his ample
store.

Auld Geordie was a favourite that every boy could trust;
His manly form has long ago been crumbled into dust;
But where is he, the spirit man?—a soul can never die—
On seraph wing ascended to a home beyond the sky.
His intellect was sharp and keen, well versed in Bible
lore,

The doings of the Hebrew kings he'd tell you by the
score.

Can I forget the day we met upon the rising hill?
He raised his hand as if to bless, his form erect and still;
Then said, "The tents of Cushan great in sad affliction
lie,

The land of Midian trembled for the Majesty on high;
And may this God, who never fails, His grace to thee
extend,

And fill thy soul with love and truth, till life is at an
end."

No other word he spake, but left me wondering to reflect
On all he said, and if his words with God would have
effect.

The place, his look, the words of truth, sank deep into
my mind,

Their echo comes again to-night, I hear them on the
wind;

MEMORIES OF THE PAST

The prayer was heard, for now I know since years have
 passed away,
The power of God has kept my feet from stumbling
 day by day.

There figures too in days gone by a dear old friend
 of mine,
Then surely for old Farmer Rob I'll add another line.
I think I see his kindly smile as o'er the fields at play,
We scampered helter-skelter through among the ricks
 of hay;
Or in the stackyard of a night at hide-and-seek we ran,
And blind man's buff in winter time with Maggie,
 Pate, and Dan,
He warned us ne'er to seek for nests, nor play on
 Sabbath Day,
For those we loved would grieve to see their bairnies
 gang astray.
Alas! how Time with silent tread his footprints leaves
 behind,
Impairs the body, bows the head, and tells upon the
 mind;
For Robin's frame grew feeble, and no more he tills
 the soil,
The sickle answers not his touch, for he has ceased to
 toil.

Now of my village schoolmates, too, a word I have
 to say,
And honest John, my champion brave, must figure in
 my lay;
For, when a boy, my faithful friend avenged a cruel
 wrong,
When one had badgered me to fight though I was not
 so strong;

He off his jacket, bared his arm, and dared my foe
to fight,
And cried, "Now, Bill, you stand aside, I will main-
tain your right."
He pummelled him right heartily, my foe soon skulked
away,
And left John victor of the field, a proud, proud boy
that day.
This was an act of friendship—more a brother could
not show—
And may a higher hand than mine, through winter's
wind and snow,
Reward him for his timely aid, and easy make the load
He carries through the valley to the presence of his
God.*

Another friend was Jamie; well do I remember when
We went to learn swimming in the linn at Marion's
glen!
And once from school we played the fab to gather hips
and slaes,
To deck the brows of Meg and Jean, the loves of our
young days.
When verging into manhood to the Volunteers we went,
"Aye ready," was our watchword when on duty we
were bent.
May this be still our watchword, and our path be
straight and clear
Throughout the sterner walks of life, our souls be void
of fear.
Be brave, my comrade, onward march, we soon shall
reach the goal,
Yon stately edifice that's reared, the haven of the soul.

*My friend was on his deathbed when above was penned.

MEMORIES OF THE PAST

Yet there are others not less dear whose memories are
green,
Their names inscribed upon the stones where they can
now be seen,
Within Saint Ninian's old churchyard, there, mingling
with the dust,
Their souls have gone in triumph to the city of the just;
Awaiting there the final morn, the great, the judgment
day,
When soul with body re-unites to rank in grand array;
No radiant sun to light the scene, the splendour of the
throne
Transcendent in its brightness, as the Master calls
His own;
“Come to my right, ye ransomed ones, from sin, from
sorrow free,
Possess your own inheritance for all eternity.”

A HIGHLAND VISION

How can man live without the land?

'Tis his by Nature, his alone;

God is on earth to take our hand,

Fear not, for He and man are one.

WHERE steep Bengoilian's lofty peaks

Look down on Campbeltown to smile,

And dark Davaar looms o'er the deep

To guard the weary fisher's toil.

Sweep on, O great Atlantic, sweep,

And break on fair Kilbrandon shore;

But to Kirkcousland's lonely isle

The great Clan Coila come no more.

'Twas there in bygone feudal days

The minister of God was seen;

Now nought remains but ruined walls

All clad with ivy's mantle green.

In stormy Covenanting times,

When Scotland strove against the wrong,

He, like a hero in the fight,

Proclaimed the Word and led the song.

Methought I heard the fervent prayer

In stormy petrel's eerie cry,

And with the swish of ocean's tide

The psalms of David wafted nigh.

A HIGHLAND VISION

I gazed across the auld kirkyaird
To hillsides once alive with men;
Then in a vision clear I saw
Them hurrying back to life again.

No swords, no dirks, had they ava',
Nor psalm, nor bible in their hand,
But on a banner clear the words:
"Back from the city to the land."

My heart rejoiced! the skirling pipes
From hill to hill their echo rang;
And sturdy men and comely maids
Were foremost in the pressing thrang.

I saw the bairnies clap their hands,
And oh! but they were pale and thin;
But when they get the caller air
New lease of life will then begin.

And some were haggard, sore with toil,
The tears were glistening in their een,
But ah! they brushed them fast aside,
For they were tears of joy, I ween.

And all along Kilbrandon shore,
And up the hillsides sloping high,
And mingling with the purple bloom,
Were hands uplifted to the sky.

The music ceased, the cry arose:
"We claim our birthright back again,"
Reverberating o'er the main,
The hills resounded: "Back again."

LECROPT AULD KIRKYAIRD

I' THE mirk o' nicht I gaed yestreen
To the Lecropt auld kirkyaird,
Whaur vassal an' lord lie side by side,
Wi' the dark yew trees on guaird.

'Tis here inscribed on a runic cross,
That a holy kirk stood by,
Whaur the hooded monks their nosters said,
An' the incense burnéd high.

O gin ye visit yon mouldrin' heaps
When the sun is sinkin' low,
The gurglin' burn i' the deep ravine
Will respond to your footsteps slow.

O wale your steps an' bare your head,
An' touchna the mossy stanes,
For the moss is like to a bairnie's cheek,
An' the crumlin' tombs to the banes.

For the eerie sough o' the wastlin' win'
Blaws saft owre the lanely graves
O' wives an' mithers an' maidens fair,
An' time-forgotten braves.

Tho' weird an' sad was my heart yestreen,
An' cauld as the nicht grass damp,
Yet a symbol o' the licht abune
Was the fire o' the glow-worm's lamp

LECROPT AULD KIRKYAIRD

O fain would I lie in yon auld kirkyaird
 'Neath the bield o' the greetin' ash,
When I am dune wi' the fecht o' life
 An' a' the warl's sair fash.

For the houlet's cry on the auld yew tree,
 An' the soun' o' the gurglin' burn,
An' the eerie sough o' the wastlin' win'
 Alane are there to mourn.

Then gang ye, visit yon auld kirkyaird
 When the sun is sinkin' low,
An' the gurglin' burn i' the deep ravine
 Will respond to your footsteps slow.

CALDERWOOD

O, CALDERWOOD is bonnie when the sun glints o'er the
lea;

O, Calderwood is bonnie when the bloom is on the pea;
The mavis and the linnet sing in yonder bosky dell,
Inviting all, in gushing notes, at this fair spot to dwell.

The Castle stands, just as of yore, but silence reigns
within;

No leal retainers ready wait, nor clang of armoured din;
No stately lady in the hall, no courtly gallant's bow;
The ancient house is desolate, and all is peaceful now.

The Maxwell barons all are gone; one fell on Flodden
field,

And for the Covenant of God one had his life-blood
spilled.

But Calder flows for ever on, thro' brake, and glade,
and glen,

And seems to sing a welcome to the toiling sons of men.

The swords are rusting in the hall, the ploughshare
turns the soil,

The land is smiling all around, responsive to the toil
Of men, united in their might a reign of peace to see,
And change the slogan cry of old to one of "Equity."

For list! the tramp of prancing steeds, a cavalcade
draws near,

A trumpet call the message brings reverberating clear,
"Come back, ye sons of toil, come back; possess the
land ye love;

It is your own to keep in trust, your loyalty to prove!"

There rose, before my raptured gaze, a skylark on the
wing,
It soared aloft, with swelling breast, in glad accord to
sing;
To me the song of joy conveyed the gladness of the band
Of sturdy men and maidens fair, now come to claim
the land.

For lo! now all along the line the edict has gone forth:
"Back to the land!" we come this day from Tweedside
to the North,
To pledge our word, whate'er betide, success shall
surely flow,
If with the seed we plant this day we true devotion show!

The great Co-operative plan, let all true men unite,
And trust the leaders in the fray who battle for the right;
Then nations shall be prosperous, and kings shall bend
the knee,
The "ideal" man is realised: the people shall be free!

MY MITHER'S NOCK

Sixty years ago the plenishing of a working man's home was considered incomplete without a grandfather clock. Such a commodity, however, was awanting in my father's home; and often, having heard my mother say she would like to have an eight-day clock, I as a boy resolved that when I grew to be a man, she would have her wish gratified. In due course I struck a bargain with a second-hand furniture dealer for a grandfather clock. I shall never forget that evening when my shopmates and I carried the clock home! I lived in a little village about a mile from the town, and, to reach it, we had to pass up a narrow lane, where we had to proceed in Indian file, the first man carrying the great trunk across his shoulders, the second with the heavy weights suspended round his neck by a rope, the third with the movement and the pendulum, while your humble servant brought up the rear with the glass face. When we reached the little cottage, my mother was standing at the door, looking for my homecoming. She held up her hands in amazement when she saw the clock. She promptly realised the situation, however, and went inside to put the kettle on the fire to make the tea, while we set the clock up against the wall, where it still stands to tell its story. My mother, to me, was the greatest woman of her time. Until then it had never occurred to me that it was possible for another to cross her path, and it took no small courage for me to tell her that I was getting married. I think I see her now, as she looked up, and with a considerable amount of bitterness in her voice, replied: "Ah weel, I didna think you would ha'e been in sic a hurry." Then she turned on her heel and left me. Presently she came back and exclaimed, in much the same tone of voice: "An' ye'll be takin' awa' your nock?" "No, no," said I, "that would be mean, but I'll tell you what I would like." "Ah weel, what micht that be?" "The auld wag-at-the-wa'." "Oh," she replied, rather better pleased, "ye'll get that." And so I got the old wag-at-the-wa' and hung it up in my new home until—

THE ither nicht at stoppin' time
I dauner'd hame to tea,
There on the fluir wee Willie played,
As blithe as blithe could be.

MY MITHER'S NOCK

"Oh guidness me! what's this he's got?"

I straucht said to his mither,
When Bessie started up an' cried,
"Ye're no' to touch my brither."

"Oh no," said I, "he's no' to blame,
The wee thing hasna sense,
I'll pit the saddle on the horse
That should hae had the mense."

But, while I stood an' angry seemed,
The bairn held up to me
A han' aff my auld mither's nock,
An', lauchin', cried oot, "See!"

I smilin' said, "The dear auld nock,
That hung upon the wa'
In my ain hame, whaur, as a lad,
I thocht it aye wad fa'.

"For on the skew it hung for years,
But tauld the time fu' weel,
An' said, "tick, tick," frae morn till nicht
To mither at her wheel.

"Twas there my faither started life,
A snug tho' auld thack hoose,
An' there he broucht his Jenny dear,
Sae canty an' sae croose.

"Ye say, 'It's dune,' but stop awee,
It's linked wi' my auld folk,
For a' my mither aften heard
Was, 'tick, tick,' frae this nock.

“When she would sit an’ wait for me,
Then hear a passin’ fit,
She’d look the nock, then sigh, an’ say
‘It’s no’ that laddie yet.’

“For oh! she had a mither’s heart,
And ne’er the door would lock
Till hame I cam’, tho’ I micht be
Ashamed to look the nock.

“An’ had ye seen’t at flittin’ time
Row’d in my faither’s cloak,
The care, an’ the injunction gi’en
Was, ‘See an’ mind the nock.’

“It weathered a’ the tear and wear
For mair than thirty years,
An’ witness’d a’ their joys, I ween,
Their sorrows an’ their tears.

“Fu’ weel I mind ae winter nicht
It wouldna gang ava,
An’ auld Tam Frew drap’t in; said he,
‘I’ll sune set it awa’.’

“Agreed; he took it aff the nail
An’ to his wark like stour;
My mither tells him, wi’ a smile,
‘It never chapps the ’oor.’

“Pin after pin, wheel after wheel,
He laid a’ in a raw,
Then brush’d an’ oiled, then screw’d it up,
Oor guid wag-at-the-wa’.

“Twa shillin’s bricht my mither paid,
An’ pleased richt weel was she,
But, ere the man was doon the loan,
It chappit twenty-three.

“The bairnies laughed, my faither laughed,
Said he, ‘Ye’re dune the noo,
The man had far owre much to say
For a’thing to be true.’

“But by an’ by ’twas made a’ richt,
And ticked for mony a day,
An’ on’t the bairnies learnt to count
An’, ‘Ane, twa, three,’ to say.

“An’ can I see it wasted noo,
Gi’en to the bairns to play,
The gless o’t smashed, the wheels a’ loose.
An’ left to gang astray?

“No, no, I’ll drive anither nail
Into my ain house wa’,
An’ hing it up, my mither’s nock,
’Twill tell o’ days awa’.

“As lang’s it’s there I’ll mind o’ her
That aften watch’d the nock,
An’ while I hae’t she’ll neither want
Her denner nor a frock.

“Sae let it hing, for dear to me
Are mem’ries o’ the past,
An’ say, ‘tick, tick,’ till a’ is o’er
An’ I am hame at last.”

A GLINT O' THE PAST, AND A WISH FOR THE FUTURE

My grandfather, when a lad, was pressed into the King's service at the Broomielaw of Glasgow, by a company of bluejackets who had come up from Greenock. Somewhere on the Pacific coast he deserted the ship, and travelled across the continent, enduring great hardships. When he at length arrived at New York, he joined the American navy. In 1812, when war was declared against America, he was serving on board the "Chesapeake," and was present at the famous engagement between that vessel and the "Shannon." As everybody knows, the "Chesapeake" was worsted, taken as a prize, and the crew made prisoners. In due course my grandfather was discharged from the navy at Greenock, and I have distinct recollection, as a child, of seeing him sitting in the old Chippendale chair, where he was ever ready to recount in graphic form his experiences of early life.

THIS auld arm chair is to bode ye guid luck,
An' remind ye o' days that hae slippit awa',
For dootless ane stood in your auld grannie's neuk
Like to this, ance the grandest big chair e'er I saw.

There my grandfather sat, an' he tauld o' the time
When Napoleon had threatened to come to our shore,
An' the fire o' his ee seems to 'clink wi' my rhyme,
As he gript the auld chair, an' said, "Never no more."

An' there by this chair, at the knee o' my grannie,
I said my guid words when the readin' was dune,
Wi' a clap on the head, "To your bed noo, my mannie,
We'll leave a' oor cares wi' the guid Lord abune."

A GLINT O' THE PAST, AND A WISH FOR THE FUTURE

But low i' the dust is my grandfaither's arm,
And beside him auld grannie is sleepin' at rest;
But the auld chair I jealously guard frae a' harm,
An' aroon' it a halo o' interest invest.

Tho' shaky an' frail, it is a' that noo lingers,
Nae mair sits my grannie wi' big worset ba':
Sae deftly she knitted, like magic her fingers
Would slip oot an' in, like the years that's awa'.

Then think o' this chair as a gentle reminder,
An' retain what is guid o' the years that are past,
That as ye grow auld, ye may ever grow kinder,
And a conscious reward will be yours at the last.

THE CRIPPLE BOY

IN the hurry and scurry and bustle of life,
In a part of the city where poverty's rife,
'Twas an evening in July, I noticed a throng
At the side of the street, as I hastened along.

Pushing in thro' the crowd, I was anxious to see,
In this poor rowdy street, what the matter could be;
Then I stopped, as in wonder I looked all around
At the crowd, with their eyes so intent on the ground.

Ah! a poor little cripple, in tatters, stood crying,
While his crutch on the pavement, in splinters, was
 lying,
'Twas the poor laddie's all, in his home and at play,
But it now was a wreck as in fragments it lay.

From the street to the boy every eye was now turned,
While the look on his face in my heart deeply burned,
Though uncouth and uncultured the crowd seemed to be,
Yet the rough hearts were touched by the scene, I could
 see.

And a brave little fellow stood close by his side
Saying, "Dinna greet, Davie, beside ye I'll bide,"
While a wee laddie cried, "I will rin for your mither,"
I could see the poor cripple was lo'ed like a brither.

When his mother had come, how she stared on the scene
With a pitiless eye, a disgrace to be seen;
For her hair was dishevelled, the cause being drink,
"Oh! alas for wee Davie," was all I could think.

THE CRIPPLE BOY

“Let us help him,” said I, so we lifted the boy,
Tho’ the tears were still flowing, now doubtless with joy,
Then into our workshop, set him down on the floor,
Took his length for a crutch, inches thirty-and-four.

Then I beckoned to Kelly to come to my aid,
He at once understood, although nothing was said,
And so deftly and quickly he handled the plane,
The poor boy for the road was soon ready again.

With the cuff of his jacket he wiped off the tears
As I spoke to him kindly, dispelling his fears,
And he looked quite amazed—’twas a wonderful sight,
As the bright blue eyes glistened in silent delight.

O that I could have painted the look on his face!
’Twas the smile of an angel in sweetness and grace,
Tho’ he spoke not a word as he bounded away,
True salvation to him was the new crutch that day.

THE STORY OF AUNT MARTHA

THERE once was a poor little negress
Who toiled in the fields of corn,
In the dark, dark days of slavery
Before our Queen was born.

This maid looked up in her simple faith
To the white mother's God prayed she,
"O hasten the day, Great Spirit," she cried,
"When my country shall be free."

Still rampant grew the trade with years,
The white man as its nurse,
Yet his conscience seemed to quiver
As he fattened on the curse.

Where'er the flag of Britain waves,
Our nation gave decree,
No man shall buy his brother man,
And all from chains be free.

Our good Queen signed, "Victoria,"
Beside it set her seal,
The parchment sent to Liberia,
That none in slaves should deal.

This little black-skinned maiden cried,
"All glory, I am free,
And every penny I can save,
I'll use to cross the sea;

"That I may go to the white mother
Who lives in the far-off land,
And look upon her ere I sleep,
And kiss her gentle hand."

In God's good time the journey's made,
The loyal subject came
To bow the knee, in Windsor's court,
To Britain's Queen of fame.

The Queen arose to meet her guest,
Who shook as if in fear,
Her hand was grasped, the good Queen spoke,
"Tell me, why came you here?"

O Mother Queen, for sixty years
I've toiled in marshy swamps,
That I might come four thousand miles
And humbly give thee thanks."

Queen mother spoke: "My good lady,
The Spirit gave thee health
To visit this fair land of love,
And least of all myself.

"That Spirit gave to all of us
The place we have, and power;
Tell all your friends when you return
To trust Him every hour."

"Oh, Mother Queen," the negress said,
"I longed to see thy face
Before I slept, so that I might
That Spirit's image trace."

THE DEATH OF THE YELLOWHAMMER

I LOVE to see the birds go free,
And hear the welkin ringing,
And watch fair Nature's bursting forth,
Or skylarks soaring, singing.

Long years ago, I recollect,
I had some service rendered
To help a careless poacher wight,
And thus his thanks he tendered,

With gladsome smile, "Man, come alang,
You'll get a shot, I'm thinking,
Before yon summer sun is set,
That's o'er Ben Lomond sinking."

It was a lovely eve in June,
The laden bees were humming,
And through the field the drowsy kine
Home to be milked were coming.

A yellowhammer on a tree
Its song of praise was singing
With swelling throat and heaving breast,
The tender twig was swinging.

"Ah! there's a shot," he, pointing, said,
"Be steady now, aim siccar;
Along the barrel cast your eye,
Then firmly press the trigger!"

THE DEATH OF THE YELLOWHAMMER

Apt pupil, I took steady aim,
And—Bang!—then all was quiet;
The wounded bird dived from the tree
Into a ditch close by it.

Dismayed, I bounded o'er the bank,
There, on the nest, lay dying
The parent bird; its quivering wings
Were o'er its young ones lying!

Four little beaks were opened wide,
The parent's life was ending;
Each panting throb, like thunderbolt,
My cruel heart was rending!

I gently smoothed the plumage down,
My eyes suffused with sorrow,
Oh! what will these wee fledglings do?
How will they fare to-morrow?

“What have I done? alas!” said I,
By keen remorse demented;
My poacher friend, with drooping head,
To my deep grief assented.

But I was young, a laddie then;
'Tis forty years to-morrow:
This yellowhammer died for me,
And left a living sorrow!

For lo! I learnt a lesson then,
That since new joy has given;
The sacrifice thus made for me
Has brought me nearer Heaven.

A CYCLE SPIN

FRAE toil an' moil, a glad release,
Wi' twa auld freens to sniff the breeze,
An' healthy appetite appease,
 An' mak' a day o't;
We took oor wheels an', if ye please,
 This was the way o't.

Nae care had we, nor business worry,
We hied to Ayr, whaur in a scurry
The eldrich witches in their flurry,
 At Allowa',
Flew after Tam, wha wi' the hurry
 Scarce breath could draw.

Auld Ayr was in an awfu' muddle,
The streets wi' trams were in a guddle;
Steerin' oor way thro' sic a puddle,
 We tried to bike it—
The council's surely on the fuddle,
 Or something like it.

Then hobblin' owre the causey blocks,
Oor banes were sair wi' curséd knocks
Frae stanes that looked like broken rocks
 Hewn frae a quarry,
I'd rather suffer in the stocks
 Than yonder tarry.

A CYCLE SPIN

“For honest men auld Ayr surpasses”
A’ ither toons; forbye, the lassies
Tak’ foremost place among the classes
 Ootside o’ Ayr;
So Robin said, wha frae the masses
 Had waled wi’ care.

At odd times Rob was unco canty,
Whan owre a dram he micht be vanty
An’ speak ootricht a wee bit ranty,
 Wi’ barley bree
Made jinglin’ rhyme that ne’er was scanty
 To bare the gree.

We reached the inn whaur Souter Johnny
Aft met wi’ Tam, his bosom crony:
They baith could tak a dram wi’ ony
 Like-minded pair;
Guid judges too o’ lasses bonny
 Thro’oot auld Ayr.

We laid oor bikes against the wa’,
A bonny show as e’er I saw,
The middle ane withoot a flaw—
 A “Hudson” new,
Spoke for itsel’—I dinna blaw,
 But gie it due.

We stepped inside to get some packin’
O’ meat an’ drink, we baith were lackin’,
An’ in a trice were busy takin’
 A hearty meal,
When at the door twa cronies crackin’
 Had eyed my wheel.

To hurry thro' I deemed a duty,
When on the street a workman sooty
Exclaimed, "Auld chap, your bike's a beauty,"
 Then rubbed his chin,
"If in a race, e'en 'gainst auld Clooty,
 I'd bet you'd win."

I thanked him for his kindly banter,
"Look here, my freen', had Tam O'Shanter
Been mounted thus, he'd in a canter
 Hae cleared the brig,
An' for the screigh o' witches chanter
 Cared na a fig."

But we maun haste anither mile,
Whaur Robin first looked up to smile,
Anon to sing in splendid style
 O' bonny Doon,
An' famous mak' the lands o' Kyle
 The hale warl' roun'.

At length the hame o' honest Robin
I scrutinized, my head a-bobbin',
Wrote in the book, wi' heart-strings throbbin',
 A verse or twa,
Then doff'd my cap an' mounted Dobbin'
 An' rode awa.

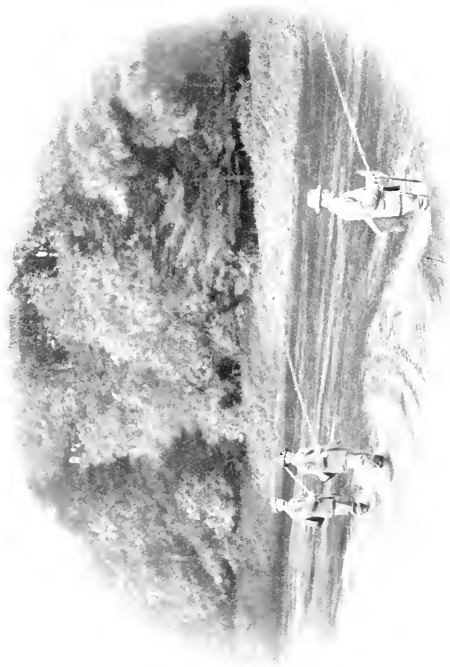
A FISHING EXPEDITION

THREE freen's o' mine the ither day
Shouther'd their rods an' hied away,
To pass the nicht, as ane would say,
 At salmon fishin';
Their wives micht yawn till screigh o' day,
 But they were missin'.

Methinks I see them in a raw,
Three gallant lads as e'er I saw,
Wi' waidin' buits an' cleeks an' a',
 An' bread an' forage,
Besides a wee drap Usquebaugh,
 To gie them courage.

Sweet Tweed! thou bonny siller stream!
Aft hae I gazed as in a dream
An' watched the sun, wi' sudden gleam
 Athwart thy bosom;
To steal frae thee, to me doth seem
 A kin' o' gruesome.

Then in a bonnie bosky glade,
The gentle Isaacs plied their trade
In cosy nook whaur trees did shade,
 Hopes rinnin' high,
They cast their lines, this bold brigade,
 Their luck to try.



A FISHING EXPEDITION.

Metinks I see them in a raw,
Three gallant lads as e'er I saw.



Three mortal 'oors they lashed awa',
But dod! they ne'er a beastie saw,
Nor fient a bite they got ava',
 An' time was fleetin',
Until a show'r began to fa',
 The daylight greetin'.

"It's desperate wark," cried Geordie Tait,
"For twenty years, baith soon an' late,
I've fished the Tweed, an' ne'er been bate,
 It's simply awfu'!"
"Great Scott!" the hills reverberate
 The words unlawfu'!

"Confound it a'!" cried Willie Scott,
"I'll try't again, withoot my coat,
An' ford the stream, I'll bet a groat
 I'll hook a beastie,"
When Lawson cried, "Ye bletherin' goat
 Don't be sae hasty."

A stranger on the ither side
Directed Willie whaur to bide,
"An' gently throw against the tide,
 An' wait a wee,
For doon the stream your line will glide
 An' then ye'll see!"

This Willie did, I'm prood to tell,
When in a trice, he heard a yell,
"Ye've hooked a beast, as sure as hell,"
 The stranger shouted,
As doon the bank he ran pell-mell,
 Like foe that's routed!

“Get on the bank, be quick, an’ syne
Let go your reel, an’ gie it line;
That’s it, my lad, ye’re daein’ fine,
 I’ll tak’ an aith
Ere half an ’oor, the beast is thine,
 As sure as death!”

Lawson and Tait ran back an’ fore,
The stranger danced an’ cursed an’ swore,
Until the sweat frae every pore
 Ran like a river,
While up the stream the salmon tore
 The line to sever.

“Tits, damn it, man, ye’re petrified!”
While on the bank his rod he shied,
“Let go your reel! let go!” he cried
 Like man demented,
Exhausted, dune, he gaspin’ sighed,
 Then fell an’ fented.

At last, beside an auld yew tree,
The beast was landed, Scott cried, “See!
A bonnier fish there couldna be
 Ta’en frae the water!”
The very kine rampaged wi’ glee
 At a’ the clatter.

Wi’ shouts o’ joy the echoes rang,
“She’s twenty pund;” said Tait, “Ye’re wrang,
An’ to auld Reekie, hame we’ll gang
 An’ hae it tested,
At twenty-five the scale will bang,
 Or I am bested!”

Sae doon they sat to eat a snack,
An' wash it owre, to be exac',
Wi' mountain dew frae Tillymac,
 Drink o' the nation!
Then slung the fish roun' Willie's back,
 Marched to the station.

Snug in the train, the hale road hame,
They played at nap, a threesome game,
"To scoop the pool, an' mak' a name,"
 Cried Willie Scott,
"I'll stake my Jean, a sonsy dame,
 An' beat the lot!"

Auld Reekie mony a sicht has seen,
But nane to beat that day I ween,
For ilk ane glowr'd wi' baith their een
 At the procession,
Till Scott got hame an' gied to Jean
 His hale possession.

His Jeanie, pleased to see the fish,
Noo conjured mony a dainty dish;
"Od! Willie, man! I'se get my wish
 And hae a party;
But oh! thy luck at cairds, I squish
 An' dae it hearty!"

"I'll let ye fish as lang's ye like
For salmon, trout, or even pike,
That ye may ken I'm no' a fike,
 But gam'lin', never!
I'd rather dee ahint a dyke
 Or in the river!"

A FISHING EXPEDITION

The ither twa, each to his Bess,
Got hame, like bairns that's faitherless,
An' telt their tale in great distress
 Withouten faith;
But gentle words, an' kind caress
 Restored them baith.

My story's dune; let a' comply
To raise their reamin' bumpers high
An' quaff them aff; when they are dry,
 Then keep on wishin'
To join the three, when neist they try
 The game o' fishin'!

PERTH: AN APPRECIATION

THOU ancient town by Silver Tay,
I would thy grace and power portray,
As on thy bridge of arches nine,
I pledge thy fame in mystic wine;
For all around the wooded hills
The breath of Paradise distils
Thy beauty and sublimity.

Thy sylvan avenue of trees,
Wherein disport the toiling bees
In balmy June when days are long,
And lovers swell the happy throng,
To breathe again in willing ears
The tender tale, all down the years
Divine in its simplicity.

Thy hills Kinnoull and Tibbermoor,
Look down like lovers to allure
Yon gorgeous valley soft and sweet,
An Eden where true lovers meet
And revel in thy kindly shade;
'Tis Nature's nest, wherein is laid
A city fair and beautiful.

And far outlined against the sky,
The Grampians rear their heads on high,
Severe and stern, they seem to say
"Behold! we guard the crystal Tay,
Wrapt in our coat of winter snow,
We smile on all the plain below,
Refulgent in its loveliness."

PERTH

The vista from the Baiglie's side
Entranced the Roman in his pride—
“Let us erect in yonder plain
An altar to our warriors slain,
And thus commemorate the day
When first we saw the noble Tay
Roll on in its magnificence.”

Thy deeds of valour in the past
Can never die; their shadows cast
O'er Robert Lamb and Helen Stark,
Immortalised when days were dark;
Then rank intolerance ran high:
We profit now—they dared to die
For freedom and the Covenant.

On yonder Inch, there is a stone
That marks the spot, serene, alone,
Where sixty men in wild array,
With gleaming dirks rushed on to slay;
They fought to win, all fell but two,
While king and nobles met to view
The combat fierce and terrible.

Thy walls and fortresses are gone,
But still remains the Kirk St. John,
Before St. Ninian came to tell
The simple story, “All is well,”
This holy edifice was reared,
A monument to be revered,
And interest posterity.

Thy great traditions guard with care,
 And reverence thy "Maiden fair,"
 For lo! mine eyes beheld her near,
 Fit creature for a noble sphere,
 Her raven hair coiled o'er her brow,
 With such as she thy future now
 Is bosomed in security.

THE WATER OF LADORE

No little trickling brooklet is
 The Water of Ladore,
 That, purling, flows through pebbly bed,
 Expanding to the shore.

'Tis a mighty rushing torrent
 That is deaf'ning in its roar,
 And seems to say: "Make way, make way!
 For the Water of Ladore."

It bounds, it leaps, it quivers,
 It springs; then on pell-mell,
 Till in the lake of Derwent deep
 It rests, as in a well.

PAISLEY : A SKETCH

If you've never been to Paisley,
Be sure an' gang the morn,
You'll see the hoose in Castle Street
Whaur Tannahill was born.

You'll see the river Cart as weel,
An' big ships at the quay,
An' what a favour'd toon it is
To be sae near the sea.

They've spent some thoosan' pounds, 'tis said,
To try an' oust the Clyde,
The trade that's at the Broomielaw
Should be at Causeyside.

They say oor patron saint was wrang
To build his kirk up here,
They're like to eat their fingers since
Because they hae nae pier.

Perchance there was nae finger post
To say, "This is the Cart,"
Or else Saint Mungo would hae kent
An' they'd hae had the start.

A suburb still Saint Mungo is,
At least that's what they say;
We plod on at the Broomielaw,
An' let them hae their way.

They think they're smart, the Paisley folk,
 An' sharp as ony knife,
 An', if you werena telt before,
 You'd think you were in Fife.

This must account for success, tho'
 Jist look at their Toon Ha',
 An' as you pass alang the street
 Observe they dress fu' braw.

They've poets, an' astronomers
 That tell you 'bout the stars,
 An' when the next eclipse will be
 Of Saturn, or of Mars.

Philosophers, an' sages too,
 Micht tak' rank wi' Carlyle,
 An' doctors in't famed far and near
 For curing o' the bile.

Besides a lot o' ither things
 Owre numerous to name,
 An' if a man belongs to there
 He's sure to rise to fame.

'Tis said, the North Pole, when it's reached,
 A Scotsman will be there,
 An' if he's asked from whence he comes
 It's Paisley, I could swear.

THE DEVON—AN APPRECIATION

IN the shadow of the Ochils,
When the sun is sinking low,
Go and sit beside the Devon,
Muse, and watch its onward flow.

I have been in other countries
In my manhood's early prime,
But at eve beneath the Ochils
There's a calm that is sublime.

I have gazed on Alpine mountains,
I have looked on other skies,
But the music of the Devon
In my memory never dies.

And in yonder hallowed corner,
Where the roses are in bloom,
There the loved ones now are sleeping
In the shadow of the tomb.

Now the music of the Devon,
As it flows for ever on,
With its mystic voice is saying:
"I am here, and I am gone."

Then behold in all the shadow
When the sun is sinking low,
Life is like to thee, O Devon,
And will never cease to flow.

II

REFLECTIVE

WHENCE CAME WE?

SOMEWHERE out of the darkness came the light,
And shed a lustre over Nature then;
Behold life came—anon, the sons of men,
Who marvelled at the great creative might.

Whence came we? was the question then as now,
Out of the Cosmos, far beyond the sun?
Electric force? all life incarnate one?
From scintillations of the light, or how?

We come, we know, and breathe a summer day,
And in the autumn die, and then, what then?
Ah! whence, as yet, is still beyond our ken—
We neither know the wherefore, nor the way.

But do we die? is this a fact we know?
For death may to our souls a lie unfold;
Life once begun, like particles of gold
Tried in a furnace, doth the brighter glow.

There must be cause, for no effect can be
Born of itself from out of time or space;
Beyond the ether IS, for us to trace
The source, our birthright to eternity.

MATTHEW XXV. 47.

“ And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.”

Written during service, above being the text.

We read to-day that God is just,
But sinners that do wrong
Will punished be eternally—
Is this not far too long?

Eternity of punishment
A heathen god might give;
The God we have conception of
Wants all mankind to *live*.

And living is to joy in life,
And know that all is well
With those we love; e'en those we hate
We would not wish in hell.

But then we hate not any man,
Would rather ease his load;
We should not be behind, at least
In love, and love is God.

'Tis frightful, awful cruelty
To punish such as I,
Far better and more God-like if
He said, all men must die.

LIFE'S BRIEF SPAN : A SOLILOQUY

IN the morning of life, when our years have been few,
When all is so fresh, as tho' sparkling with dew,
With the songs of the birds our young hearts beat in
tune,

And respond to their gladness like roses in June;
Ah! then how we build those bright castles in air,
And behold with a smile that all Nature is fair,
But as years roll along, there comes o'er us a change,
For our castles soon vanish, e'en Nature looks strange,
When our visions of youth have all melted, like snow
That floods but the river, increasing its flow;
Then hard is our life, yet our hopes and our fears
Commingle with pleasures, to mellow our years;
Oh! then do we feel that our life is a race,
Howe'er we endeavour to measure the pace,
That others may know, as they journey the road,
Each step we have taken was upward to God;
For dang'rous the pathway, unless we are sure
That the Master Himself hath made it secure.

In some shady retreat the hedgerows among
So sweet to the ear is the nightingale's song,
Tho' graceful his form, and so charming his call,
Yet his song in the night seems a mock'ry withal.
So like to man's folly, this song of the night,
'Tis heard but to die with the dawn of the light;

Then away with all joys that are born in the dark,
 But tuned be our hearts to the song of the lark,
 That warbles his lay as he mounts to the sky,
 On the wings of the morn see him soaring on high,
 Along, and athwart, in the power of his might,
 Then up, and away, in his heavenward flight,
 Till we see but a speck in the blue sky above,
 Still the notes of his song are like accents of love,
 That resound on our ear as we linger below,
 And our souls are entranced, and then do we know
 That the emblem of goodness is pleasure to give
 To our fellows on earth, if with God we would live;
 For this is the proof He hath given to man,
 Much will He forgive, if we do what we can.

TO A YOUNG FRIEND

TO-DAY you enter on a race
 Which leads to fame or to disgrace,
 Be open, candid, firm and true,
 Ne'er mind tho' this be done by few;
 The goal is reached by those who strive,
 As working bees enrich the hive;
 Be resolute, and know your mind,
 This is a virtue rare to find,
 For those who conquer self succeed
 In all they do, in all they need.
 A man is what he makes himself—
 Like purest ware or common delf,
 And perseverance leads to fame,
 Gives its reward, a stainless name.

THE GENTLE NAZARENE

Suggested on reading "The Modern Pilgrimage from Theology to Religion." (Bremner.)

THE gentle Nazarene to-day
Is much misunderstood,
He lived His life, and died to show
How all men might be good.

Unless we "see the scarlet thread
With spiritual eyes,"
We strangers are to grace and God,
And never can be wise.

Give me the love of poesy,
And character, and song,
I care not though "the scarlet thread"
To others may belong.

Dogmas and creeds, set them aside,
And act without decree;
Those men who nearest are to God
Have no theology.

The "rotten clothes, hypocrisy,"
May every man discard,
And mark the Jewish Carpenter
With glorified regard.

“ THE TIME IS SHORT ”

Lines suggested by the motto of Edmund J. Baillie, Chester, on receipt of a copy of his beautiful poem, “A Blade of Grass.”

*“ It ever looks to Heaven, as though
Its source of life it sought to know,
And thitherward it strives to grow,
This blade of grass.”*

“ THE time is short; ”

How short, how long, we may not, cannot know,
When life is young, we pass, like sunlight's glow,
From stage to stage, but still each step doth show
That “ time is short.”

“ The time is short; ”

When in the fulness of our manhood's prime,
We onward, upward, to the zenith climb;
Then hear the voice of God within us chime,
“ The time is short.”

“ The time is short; ”

This modest blade of grass, so sweetly green,
In vale, on mountain side, in shade or sheen
It flourishes, then fades, and then 'tis seen
That “ time is short.”

“ The time is short; ”

Christ on the Cross gave up His life to be
A ransom free for all, for you, for me;
And thus redeemed, it will not ever be
That “ time is short.”

“THE TIME IS SHORT”

Music by J. Drummond Young

The time is short, How short, how long, we may not, can-not know;

This system contains the first line of music. It features a treble and bass staff in B-flat major (two flats). The melody in the treble staff begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, Bb4, and C5. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with notes like F3, Bb2, and C3.

When life is young, we pass, like sun-light's glow, From stage to stage, but

This system continues the melody. The treble staff has notes such as D5, E5, and F5. The bass staff continues with notes like G2, F2, and E2. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

still each step doth show, That Time, That "Time is short."

This system concludes the piece. The treble staff ends with a half note G5. The bass staff ends with a half note F2. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.



“The time is short;”
When dark clouds come our wavering faith to try,
And from the path of rectitude we fly,
Arrest our steps, Almighty Guide, and cry,
“The time is short.”

“The time is short;”
O, may we haste to dwell within the ray
Of light, ethereal light, by night, by day!
Then see Thyself, O Lord! “Thou art the way,”
And “time is short.”

LIFE

WHEN Nature out of chaos came
The gods pronounced the work as tame,
But set themselves the genial task
To make a man that he might bask
In Nature's lap; the work was done,
And in this way was life begun.
Still incomplete this mystic plan—
An empty world save one lone man—
The gods held council once again,
Decreed that over hill and plain
This man should range, and rove, and be
A king in power and majesty
O'er earth and sea, o'er beast and bird,
But not o'er man—'twould be absurd,
For he alone was of his kind;
This knew the Great Infinite Mind,
And forthwith from his quivering side
Took from the man to make a bride,
That all the world might peopled be
In likeness to the Deity.

A PRAYER

OMNISCIENT God, how oft we feel
Before Thy presence we should kneel,
Confess how impotent and lame
Are all attempts to know Thy name,
And understand that only good
Proceeds from Thee, the source of food
That fills the soul and makes us free,
To know that Thou in truth must be
Upon the earth, and not above,
As some would have Thee, and in love
Make manifest that Thou art true,
And dost in ev'ry heart renew
The fire divine, as at the first,
Wherewith the soul that was athirst
Was filled by Thee from day to day,
Until the inner man could say,
"I know in whom I do believe,
And ev'ry moment I receive
The Bread of Life, Thine own sweet will,"
And then the inner man is still,
And all the outer actions tell
The world at large, that all is well.

Forgive, O Lord, the thought impure
That steals the truth when we are sure;
Instead of cav'ling over creeds,
Help us to prove the truth in deeds.
With preaching little good is done,
Precept alone, convinces none.

A PRAYER

The food by which our souls are fed
Is deeds that live when we are dead.
Then help us, Lord, all men to save
From curses deeper than the grave,
Then Heaven will be a place that's here,
No heart will quiver, none will fear
To meet his fellow or his God;
Whoso thus loves must know the road
That leads the mind to truth—the best
And highest good, a soul at rest.

Thy kingdom, Lord, Thy throne is in
The heart, to overthrow the sin;
Thy love may all men know to be
The passport to eternity.

A DREAM

'Twas in a dream, my mother came
And took me by the hand,
"To clear your mind of doubt," she said,
"I come from Yonderland.

"When I sojourned on this fair earth,
I often heard it said
That, for our future weal on high,
A sacrifice was made.

"That Christ gave up His life to be
A ransom for the world,
And all who would not this believe
To an abyss were hurled.

"Scant justice this to erring man
I thought so long ago,
But all the knowledge here attained
Is limited, you know.

"Now I've been there, and understand
The meaning, clear as noon,
And each in turn must sacrifice
To be with Christ in tune.

"The life on earth is but a part,
And I have come to say,
That heaven is here for men to make,
And immanence the way.

A DREAM

“To the degree you know this truth,
And practise that you preach,
To that extent you are the Christ,
For deeds alone can teach.

“Then marvel not, though some may smile—
The spirit power remains,
Part of the grace that Christ possessed
The soul of man retains.

“There’s not in all the realm of space
A greater force than man,
He has indwelling God, with power
The universe to scan.

“And you must move the hearts of men
And raise the mighty arm,
The Christ within shall make you strong
To shield the weak from harm.”

Then I awoke, ’twas Christmas morn,
The vision passed away;
Her parting words I still can hear,
“Thy promptings now obey.”

A MESSAGE FROM "OVER THERE"

LISTEN! do I hear an echo
Sounding through the realms of space?
Wavelets bringing on their bosom
Messages for me to trace.
Is it heart-throbs from the spirit,
Longings I may realise
When the golden bowl is broken,
And the soul from body flies?

Or the tick of moments flying?
I can note them on the clock,
As the raindrops' pitter-patter
Wears the adamantine rock.
No, the message, "Learn to listen
To the teachings of the mind,"
Promptings by the Great Eternal
To the soul by truth refined.

Sweetest music in its cadence,
Like the murmur of the shell,
From the spirit land of wonder,
Telling me that all is well;
'Tis anon a perfect whisper,
Audible from over there,
Just as if ten thousand voices
Merged to waft it through the air.

Dark theology has blinded
Thousands in the days gone by,
Now behold! the truth evolving—
That no soul shall ever die.
Death was likened to a valley
Dark and dismal, deep and broad;
It is false, there is no shadow
In the avenues of God.

Then, O Lord, exalt my manhood,
Till my spirit life is free;
Thou dost own the heart in earnest—
Truth, that is a fact to me.
Wouldst thou learn a lesson from it?
Wouldst thou know this God-like plan?
Give thine ear to inner teachings,
These reveal His life in man.

THE CREATION

Genesis, 1st chapter.

BLACK night, that like a mighty shade
Enveloped all that yet was made,
The quivering mass, the spirit said,
Be still.

Darkness and chaos reigned around,
A world in space, as yet unbound.
The Godhead spoke in voice profound,
Decreed:

"Let all in space, earth, sky, and sea,
And firmament divided be;"
'Twas done, and all was fair to see.
And good.

But day and night had not been given—
Until the majesty of heaven
Should speak, the clouds were yet ungiven
With light.

Amazing words: "Let there be light!"
They rolled through the abyss of night
And shook the firmament with might—
" 'Twas done."

The sun shone forth, his light and glow
Made grass, and flowers, and trees to grow,
And streamlets to the rivers flow
With might.

THE CREATION

Brutes of their kind, fish of the sea,
Fowls of the air, and all to be
Subservient to man, when he
Was made.

The crowning work, "Let us make man
In our own form, with power to scan
Our works, that he may bless or ban
Creation."

LOST AND FOUND

Written 1888

FAR, far had I wandered
In sin's pleasant road,
Neglectful of duty,
Forgetful of God.

In morning and evening,
And noonday as well,
I was nearer, yes nearer
To death and to hell.

My happiness vanished,
All pleasure was gone;
Like a world in darkness
I stood there alone.

'Twas a light from the Cross
Dispelled all my care,
And filled me with promptings
To do, and to dare.

The duty that's foremost
I'll earnestly do,
With conscience approving
What's good and what's true.

When the journey is finished,
The labour all done,
May the balance then show
A victory won.

THE NEW THEOLOGY

Written in promptu when I reached page 175 of
Rev. R. J. Campbell's book.

ALL hail! ye sons of men, all hail!
And clothe yourselves in coat of mail,
Not like unto the days of old,
When men were brave, and stern, and cold;
But with this truth these pages teach,
That God and man together preach;
Thus immanence shall thrill the soul,
Unite each man, and thus the whole,
Till all shall see with mystic power
The simple plan, and bless the hour
That brought this book to make it clear
That there is sunshine in a tear—
A tear of love in pity given
Is all God asks to give us heaven.

This is of God, I truly think,
And now may creeds and dogmas sink,
And let our spirit life be free
To converse with the Deity.*

*Written on the last page.

WHEN YOUR BACK IS AT THE WA'

Fu' aft I think that Fortune is a gey an' fickle dame,
Wha comes wi' a' her wily charms, oor passions to
in flame,
But why should men deluded be, when siller's but a
sicht,
An' flickers like a will-o'-wisp that only shines at nicht,
For riches aft deceitfu' prove, an' lightly flee awa',
An' leave ye broken-hearted wi'—your back against
the wa'.

“In Princes dinna put your trust,” the wisest man has
said,
He micht ha'e added “Siller” too, an' on it stress ha'e
laid,
For I ha'e seen the rich th' day, clean beggar'd by the
morn,
Their prospects a' in ruins laid, an' hearts wi' sadness
torn,
For rich men in adversity, maist helpless are o' a',
An' canna stan' reverses when—their backs are at the
wa'.

Misfortunes ne'er come singly, but the man wha lives
them doon
Is he that never had the luck to own a silver spoon;
Tho' cradled in a sheilin', 'neath the mountain's rugged
shade,
The frownin' Ben but represents the stuff o' which he's
made,
An' trials are but furnaces to purify us a',
An' mak' us better than before—oor backs were at the
wa'.

Tho' hard the road an' stey the brae, you stiffen up
 your back,
 To ken yoursel's the hardest nut that ane can get to
 crack,
 An' latent po'er ye may possess, ye scarce could think
 was true,
 Till disappointments roused to life your energies anew;
 An' bear in mind, the best o' men that this warl' ever saw
 Ne'er dreamt o' their resources till—their backs were
 at the wa'.

Should heartless maid ye lichtly treat, your true affection
 scorn,
 An' blight your aspirations dear, for ane to riches born,
 Tho' sair may be your grief at first, you'll live it doon
 in time,
 If poverty's nae virtue, it can never be a crime;
 Be wise an' act discreet, an' tho' your heritage be sma',
 A manly pride will show the warl'—your back was at
 the wa'.

E'en like the spider in the tale, you "try, an' try again,"
 An' mark it as an adage true, that "pleasure follows
 pain;"
 There's no' sae mony steps atween the carriage an' the
 cart,
 An' tho' the crafty may succeed that dinna dae their
 part,
 If honest in your dealin's, this conclusion you can draw,
 Ye're sure to reach the open tho'—your back be at
 the wa'.

Consider ye're a unit, like a star that moves in space,
 Although we fail to mark its course, its destiny to trace;
 Deep hidden in futurity are truths we ne'er may ken,
 Until we cross the Rubicon, when a' thing will be plain;
 Be trustfu' an' be diligent, dark clouds will pass awa',
 An' gi'e ye cause to bless the day—your back was at
 the wa'.

REPENTANCE

THE fleeting show,
As all men know,
Will pass away,
Like winter day,
And reason says,
'Tis treason's ways,
To let time fly;
We cannot die
When we are strong,
Our days are long,
But warning take,
And ready make,
Unfeignedly.

I often feel
That I should kneel
Low in the dust,
In simple trust,
And, as a child,
In accents mild,
Pour forth my plaint,
Without restraint,
To Thee, O God,
For Thou art good,
And only can,
For sinful man,
Have remedy.

REPENTANCE

When death is nigh,
And dim my eye,
My body weak,
Nor fit to speak,
Then be Thou near,
Allay my fear,
With hand divine
Lay hold of mine,
And guide me o'er
To yonder shore
Of purest joy,
Without alloy—
Eternity.

My song of praise
To Thee I'll raise,
And angels bright
Will bring delight
To all the just,
Who put their trust,
When here on earth—
From every hearth—
In Thee alone,
And every one,
To Thee, the King,
Will glory bring,
Transcendently.

FORGIVENESS

A LADY, fair and beautiful,
Who moved with stately grace,
Yet heart as soft as any child's
Reflected in her face.

Her gentle soul had tender thoughts
For suffering mankind,
For all the wrongs and ills she sought
A remedy to find.

With mystic eyes she saw the cross,
An image in her mind,
She saw the rabble, heard the din
Slow borne upon the wind.

She heard the raillery and scorn,
She heard the scoffs and jeers,
She saw the thief's repentant look,
And Mary's bitter tears.

This image burned within her soul,
She felt it every day,
It guided her in all she did
And all that she would say.

* * * * *

The lady went one day to town
To make a shopping call;
Returning, found to her dismay
A burglar in the hall.

FORGIVENESS

In dire alarm she screamed in fear,
Two men took up the chase,
And soon they brought the burglar back
The lady fair to face.

Subdued, he pleaded hard his cause—
How from the downward track,
The road was steep as mountain high
When trying to get back.

The lady stood, as ladies can,
Majestic, yet divine;
The burglar cried with trembling voice:
“ My starving children pine.”

She listened, gave him help and food,
And murmured: “ Lord, I know ”;
Then turned and thanked the men, and said:
“ Pray loose and let him go ! ”

A silence fell upon the scene;
The burglar hid his face;
He seemed to feel that God was there,
Forgiving his disgrace.

He could not raise his head for shame
The lady's eyes to meet,
But grasped her hand in gratitude,
And rushed into the street.

The men, amazed, declared the law
A just and right decree,
And wondering, thought the lady mad
To let the man go free.

FORGIVENESS

But joy, suffused with mystic light,
Then filled her tearful eyes,
She saw the temple curtain burst,
And darkness fill the skies.

She saw the thief upon the cross
In direst agony,
Then smiled, as if she heard the cry:
"O Lord, remember me."

WHAT IS TRUTH?

FOR many years I searched the world for Truth,
Dug deep in Nature's storehouse from my youth,
Look'd up for Heaven, and at the holy shrine
Bent low the head, drank of the mystic wine;
Stood by the grave, committing dust to dust,
And felt a power unseen, yet real, and must
A presence own I could not well define,
But I was calm, and would this truth enshrine:
The lonely grave the path of life must be
Through death the birth of immortality.

Again I sought from books the Truth to know,
Heard sermons preached, and felt a tender glow
That warmed my heart, and set my soul on fire
With zeal for Christ I thought could never tire;
Nor has it; but now higher ground I take,
For God will never His own work forsake;
He hath no quarrel with His creature man,
And 'tis not true He did creation ban;
The real evangel is a broader way,
And none can ever have the power to stay
The flow of light evolving in the world,
The Christ ne'er said that millions should be hurled
To the abyss of Hell, to loathe the sight
Of festering sores, a long eternal night,
And writhe in agony while stars shall move
Through orbits planned by God, a God of love,
Who hears in vain, the long, the piteous cry
That shakes the universe: "That they might die?"

Impute to man this method, he for shame
 Would hide his face, or blush to own the name;
 The fair-faced image of the Father God
 Would be distorted; such ignoble mode
 Of dealing with an offspring smells of blood
 That has for centuries through slime and mud
 Been dragged, till earnest men now cry aloud
 Deliver us from craft, and creed, and crowd.

True men recoil from such attempts to show
 This is the way whereby they are to know
 The Deity; man's so-called lost estate
 The soul denies, and stands inviolate,
 The inner mind is stilled, the hideous plan
 To atoms crushed before enlightened man.

If God were man, we part might understand
 It possible, but in some heathen land
 Where, far remote, man dwells on virgin soil
 Content to take whate'er it gives by toil,
 In happy bliss he lives from day to day,
 And ever seems inanimate as clay,
 With spirit life untrammelled, free to grow
 Outside of sect, yet with a thirst to know
 From history's page, and learn the white man's creed;
 The same is taught him, but the motive—greed;
 The ready ear, the innocent of guile,
 Hears all that's said, and imitates the while;
 But when he learns enough the veil to draw,
 The hand outstretched is like the tiger's paw,
 Soft to the touch, but yet the claws are there
 That in a moment's wrath will rend and tear.
 Thus men will teach, and reach, and take, and hold,
 And crush the native, in their lust for gold,
 Who stands aghast when all his lands are gone
 And cries for vengeance, but he stands alone.

Let justice be where superstitions reign,
 And mingle not with Truth the love of gain;
 When men presume the way of God to show
 They should not fatten on the seed they sow;
 "Go, feed my sheep that starve on lone hillside,
 That's cold and bare with winter's storm and tide,
 Do this for Me," their Master said, and trod
 'Mong stones and thorns the path that led to God;
 Whoso acts not will never know, forsooth,
 Nor help to solve the problem, "What is Truth?"

The truth I seek is not in ether skies,
 'Tis all around, where'er I cast mine eyes,
 Save in those dens where sin and vice abound—
 Yet even there some good may oft be found—
 And Nature, in her seasons ever fair,
 Gives true response when thirsty souls repair
 To this bright fountain, where the stream is clear,
 Reflecting in its depths the Master Seer;
 While sympathetic chords are in the air
 Disseminating goodness everywhere.

The howling storm, the constant soaking rain,
 The rattling hail that strikes the window pane,
 The wind-swept vale, the ocean in its calm,
 The fragrance of the flowers our thoughts embalm;
 The kindly deed, the tear-dimmed liquid eye,
 The solace of a friend when grief is nigh;
 The bursting joy that thrills a mother's breast
 When home she welcomes chubby baby guest;
 The father's pride to see his children grow
 In strength of truth that God alone can show;
 The guileless maid upon her lover's arm
 Reposing trust that shields from ev'ry harm;
 The poor man's smile and coin to one more poor,
 Fruit of the soul that makes salvation sure;

WHAT IS TRUTH?

And gentle zephyrs fanning cheek and brow,
All go to teach that Heaven is *Here* and *Now*;
God is in man when merciful and good,
And love, the essence, is his daily food;
And this is Truth, the welling Truth to me—
Creation swells in glorious symphony.

FAITH

WHEN days are long and nights are drear,
Reduced in body, filled with fear,
O may our faith like mountains high
Keep prompting us that God is nigh.

TRUTH (TO ME)

GOD chastens whom He loves the best,
He scourges but to make us blest,
Applies the rod that we may feel
Our need before the throne to kneel,
Man trembling cries, "how vile I am,"
A subject meet for Him to damn.

This is the logic of the creed
The Church proclaims that would us lead,
The gospel of an earthly frown
To crush the spirit, keep us down,
'Tis fore-ordained, these teachers say,
And is the true, the only way.

Creeds, dogmas, views of men are cant,
And never give what mankind want;
Each one says this, or that, is wrong,
Just as he shows that he is strong;
"Believe in Christ," says Paul, "and live;"
"That's wrong," says James, "do works and give!"

Thus men will preach just what they think,
But what they do, adds link to link,
And binds the golden chain of truth,
Which longer is if in their youth
They cherish justice, mercy show,
And love the spirit's truth to know.

TRUTH (TO ME)

“ But what is truth? ” some men will ask,
For me, to tell is not a task;
What is, is truth, the wise will say,
Then that you know retain to-day,
Each morn that dawns some teaching new
Stamps on the soul, if such be true.

Whate'er you feel your conscience tell,
Take that as truth, and mark it well;
For when your hair is thin and grey,
And life is ebbing fast away,
A tranquil soul will be the test
To give you comfort, peace, and rest.



HENRY DRUMMOND.

No trenchant soldier, trained to art of war
More skilled to wield truth's powerful scimitar.

HENRY DRUMMOND

(Suggested on visiting his grave)

TREAD softly, friend, a remnant of the just
Lies buried here, commingling with the dust,
Amidst surroundings that convey with power
The changing fancy of each passing hour.

Thrice hallowed ground where mystic Drummond lies,
A mystic to the man with veiled eyes,
Whose spirit life remains a spark at most,
For lack of fuel dies, and all is lost.

Go, think of it, that such should never know
The warmth and comfort of the after glow,
When one decides to walk where Christ hath trod,
And loves mankind, as he is loved of God.

Focus thine eye upon this sacred spot,
Let soul and thought unite and marvel not,
Tho' dim the sepulchre, and dark it seem,
His life was lucid as the noontide beam.

No trenchant soldier, trained to art of war,
More skilled to wield truth's powerful scimitar;
If thou hadst seen or heard the youthful seer,
Come, mingle with the dust a silent tear.

Near by the grave the sweet carnation brings
Its balmy fragrance, whilst the throstle sings
Its song of love; O Drummond, dost thou hear
This sweetest lullaby upon thine ear?

Why linger here when thou art dead?—men say—
We do not seem to feel thou art away,
But present still; had we the power to scan
Through the dim vista to behold a man.

Truth, like a star that shoots across the sky,
May change its orbit, but it ne'er can die;
Thy life embodied truth, and now must be
The ripened germ throughout Eternity.

The child of God who does his duty best,
Brave to endure, when by temptation prest,
Will wear the crown by the triumphant worn,
When time is merged in the eternal morn.

The mighty sea, whose surging waters roll,
And weave thy name as in a heavenly scroll,
There semblance to the greater truth is seen,
And all may strive to be what thou hast been.

Thy simple faith, thy creed, "God loves us all,"
Behold the truth is love, love is the call,
And when the vesper winds sweep o'er the vale,
And crumbling worlds are dust, love shall prevail.

Then fare thee well, friend Drummond, fare thee well,
Blest be thy rest where stainless spirits dwell;
Thy life is past, to us each note is given,
To live in love, and make this earth like Heaven.

III

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP



“ PERFECT LOVE CASTETH OUT FEAR ”

WHEN love is young,
The heart is prone to live in fear,
And wonder if, when love is old,
The heart will then be stiff and cold;
But doubt not, fond one—thou art dear,
And Heaven forbid the time shall come
That I will change and love like some
 When love is old.

When love is old,
The heart reposes in the trust
That gives the hope when love is young;
When all the words are said or sung,
Then heart meets heart as at the first;
A river flowing deep but still
Must first come rushing down the hill
 Like love when young.

When love is warm,
A maiden's face will crimson turn,
That ne'er will blush when love is cold,
For disappointed love is bold,
Although the heaving breast may burn;
When faithless swain doth prove untrue,
Unchanged is she, but tells to few
 That love is cold.

“PERFECT LOVE CASTETH OUT FEAR”

When love is cold,
It then goes far afield to seek
Illicit love, that ne'er is warm,
And never can do aught but harm,
Whereas the love that's real will keep;
Tho' days be dark with clouds and rain,
No doubts will ever cross the brain
When love is warm.

TWO CUPIDS

Two cupids in triumphal car
Glide through the azure blue,
They come from mystic land afar
The quiv'ring hearts to view.

And two are pierced, as from above,
They feel the gentle pain,
The cupids kiss the parts with love
And they are whole again.

When ah! the peace! now love is sweet,
They wake as from a dream;
Two souls in unity now meet
And shed a heavenly beam.

And holy wedlock, blessèd plan,
Has brought ethereal joy!
No storm or turmoil ever can
This peerless calm annoy.

THE PENNY

SOME praise the rapid mountain stream,
But gentle love to me's supreme,
Sae I hae chosen for my theme
A Penny.

'Tis ten years since there lived a loon
In Stirling's ancient boro' toon
Wha kenned the value o' a croon,
Or Penny.

'Twas said the lassies liked him weel,
The truth o' this I'll no' conceal,
Sae hear me noo, while I reveal
The Penny.

Ae Sabbath in the month o' May
He met three lassies by the way,
Ane had forgot, a-lack-a-day,
Her Penny.

This ane was taller than the rest,
A modest queen, yet looked the best,
Altho' she lacked what they possess'd—
A Penny.

She asked the len' o't for the plate,
An "If he'd ca', but no' owre late,
She'd pay wi' interest up to date
The Penny."

A gallant aye, noo freen' indeed,
He sune supplied her present need,
An' proffered her wi' hearty speed
A Penny.

THE PENNY

Then thocht a meetin' he'd bespeak,
An' said he'd ca' within the week,
Paid wi' a kiss, he ne'er would seek
The Penny.

To Binnie's kirk they hied their way
To hear what he micht hae to say,
An' each put in the plate that day
A Penny.

The preacher spoke, wi' solemn face,
An' said salvation's got by grace,
An' no' to cost in ony case
A Penny.

A heavenly calm lit ilka face,
Such matchless love, such depth o' grace,
Sin' a' wha rin may win the race,
An' Penny.

The sermon dune, he saw her hame,
The smouldering fire was noo a flame,
And gled was he to hae a claim—
A Penny.

Sae visit after visit made
In prospect o' his being paid,
But in his haun she ne'er yet laid
The Penny.

* * * *

Years hae rolled on like river's flow,
We change as a'thing does below,
For noo there seems some prospect o'
The Penny.

THE PENNY

When hearing o' her being there,
He to Auld Reekie did repair,
Hope whisper'd she has kept wi' care
The Penny.

The fire o' love had ne'er been spent,
But dormant lay till noo he went
To ask ance mair what he had lent
The Penny.

Wi' flichtering heart he rang the bell,
What joy to baith nae tongue can tell,
Each seemed to say, "Yes, a' is well,"
My Penny.

They met at e'en behind the hill,
By Arthur's Seat he asked if still
She meant to pay wi' richt gude will
The Penny.

She gently leaned upon his breast,
Her head in silence, as was best,
An' baith looked up to God an' bless'd
The Penny.

An' noo by him 'tis clearly seen
The hand o' Providence has been
Directing, guiding, keeping clean
The Penny.

The bridal day has come at last,
An' o'er his life a radiance cast,
For noo he's got hersel' made fast
An' Penny.

A LOVER'S PLEADING

TAKE me in your arms, my love,
Let me linger there,
With my head upon your breast,
Free from ev'ry care.

Thou wouldst know how much I love
When alone with thee,
And I kiss thy ruby lips
Luscious, full and free.

Could I see thy bosom heave,
Watch its pulsing slow,
Drink the fragrance of thy breath,
Sweet and pure as snow.

All thy brightness then would shine,
Mouth and brow and eyes,
Stars in mine own firmament,
Balm for all my sighs.

THE MAID O' NITHSDALE

As wand'rin' on the banks o' Nith,
I met a bonny lass yestreen,
Ye gods, I fairly lost my pith;
She witched me sae wi' her black een.

Fu' trigly dress'd in russet goon,
For snood a silken band had she,
Her feet were cased in buckled shoon,
But oh! the glance o' her black ee.

Yet modesty was in her face,
Her comely form, an' waist sae sma';
I thocht at ance, sic' queenly grace
Would be at hame in lordly ha'.

I gazed in awe, as she drew near,
My heart was flichterin' wi' the pang,
An' silence sealed my lips wi' fear,
Lest I micht say what would be wrang.

The birds were silent in the grove,
Her sable hair the zephyr fanned,
The radiant sun seemed to approve,
Here, "Nature's noblest work is planned."

So fain would I this nicht devise
A plan to meet her in the dale,
When I could gaze wi' raptured eyes,
To prove my love, I wouldna fail.

THE MAID O' NITHSDALE

On yonder bush the roses bloom,
An' there the lintie sings its sang,
An' there, alas! I met my doom
Wi' Nithsdale's maid, my heart gaed bang.

* * * *

Years hae slipped by, like Nith's clear stream,
Since on its banks I met my queen
The lovely maid—'tis like a dream—
That witched me wi' her coal-black een.

A WITHERED ROSE

'Tis a withered rose on my desk to-night
That recalls to mind in the waning light
That a vow if made by a lady fair
Should be sacred, pure as the summer air.
'Tis the breath of Heaven o'er land and sea,
While it brings the past with its vow to me,
And the magic thrill when some months ago,
Where the Rhine and Moselle together flow,
There I chanced to meet, not in shady bower,
But aboard a train at the noontide hour,
Not a maiden coy with the speaking eyes
Or a mind to change as the March wind flies,
But a matron, pure, with a soul as bright
As the twinkling stars in a cloudless night.
And we talked of women, we talked of men,
While I learned by stealth she could wield a pen,
Was it praising Nature, or boundless sea,
Or the men she knew—'twas the same to me;
But she vowed, "I'll write, and perhaps explain."
I have waited long, but alas! in vain,
For the months have passed since I touched her hand
On that Autumn day in the far-off land;
Yet methinks that she can never forget
All the joyful hours when we thus had met.
Then a gift she gave, with a smile so sweet,
That the gods might know she was quite discreet—
'Twas a virgin rose, by the flowing Rhine,
And I knew a place in her heart was mine.

A WITHERED ROSE

For I felt it thus, yet her husband smiled,
And I wondered, now, have I been beguiled?
For my heart went down, but I spurned the thought,
As the badge of love to my senses brought
All the hope and trust that a lover knows.
And to-night I cherish this withered rose—
It is faded now, all its bloom is gone
And the fragrance perished, the dust alone
To my heart I gather, and heave a sigh
For a pledge that's bound by so frail a tie.

A WOMAN'S EYE

A WOMAN with a soft grey eye
Is credited with being sly,
While one whose eye is hazel brown
Is never seen to wear a frown.
But ah! the eye that's full and blue
Reflects a soul confiding, true;
And one with eye black as the sloe
What she may think, you ne'er can know.

LOVE UNEXPRESSED

O MAIDEN, hast thou never loved?
Or hast thou loved in vain?
Hath not thy trembling heart been moved
By some fond, trustful swain?

Hast thou not heard the tender tale
That cheers the maiden's heart?
Or hath it been of no avail?
Hast thou no counterpart?

'Tis passing sweet beside the sea,
Or by the rippling brook,
To hear it said: "How dear to me,
Thy every word and look!"

Divine is love, 'tis heaven-born,
And makes the world akin,
He knows it best who in life's morn
A maiden's heart did win.

Love is the mainspring of the earth,
And keeps it spinning round,
And bless'd is each domestic hearth
Where love doth most abound.

Love unexpressed can hardly be,
'Tis little if not shown:
The golden grain is fair to see,
But useless till it's mown.

LOVE UNEXPRESSED

I shun the man who lo'es the maid
Then scorns the sacred flame,
In lonely grave he should be laid
With an unhonoured name.

I sadly think of bygone years
As memory's page I turn,
For lonesome maids I've e'en shed tears
And been constrained to mourn.

Do years press hard upon thy brow
With memories of the past?
Let hope run high, the craving now
May find reward at last.

For love expressed some day will come
Thy longing soul to cheer,
And be the sunshine of thy home,
Dispelling every fear.

Then do not tire, but open wide
The heart for love that pleads,
Until to thee like flowing tide
Love shows itself in deeds.

THE VIENNA MAIDEN

I WAS waiting at the station
In a far-off foreign town,
There I saw a comely maiden
Kilted in a pretty gown.

While I watched her quite discreetly,
That the maiden might not see,
I could notice how completely
All she wore seemed to agree.

Spick-and-span, as man would say it,
Dressed immaculate and neat,
Blue and white the plaited gown was,
Brown the boots upon her feet.

On her breast a tender rosebud
Of a lovely orange hue,
While the soul of this fair maiden
Shone from out her eyes of blue.

Had she spoken I could fancy
Music would have filled the air,
As her presence like a sunbeam
Brightened the surroundings there.

Thus she waited like an angel
With a look that told to me,
If a lover should be coming
She a conqueror would be.

Ah! he comes! she rushed to meet him,
Threw her arms around him, then
Vanished with him like a fairy,
And I pitied lonely men.

JENNY C —

OH Jenny, ye're a saucy ane,
So a' the neebours say,
But if ye be a Christian true,
This isna quite the way.

I'm telt, for mair than twenty years
Ye've dwelt in this bit hoose,
In a' this time, I hear it said,
Ye never saw a moose.

An' morn an' e'en at least ye're seen
Gaun up an' doon the stair,
An' yet ye never think to clean't,
Noo Jenny, is this fair?

An' a' the bairns, your fit they ken,
But rin whene'er they hear't,
Bethink yersel, what can be wrang
That mak's the bairns sae fear't?

I've never seen your face, Jen',
But actions aye reflect,
An' while I write methinks I ken
Ye're ane o' the elect.

In your ain mind, at onyrate,
This seems to be the case,
But Jenny, lass, tak' tent awee,
Mak' sure ye're in the race.

For sure am I, the bairns frae Him
Wid never rin awa,
Wi' kindly smile He welcomed them
Into His lordly ha'.

MARRIAGE HYMN

O LORD, we crave Thy presence now,
As by the shores of Galilee,
When at fair Cana's marriage Thou
A gracious Guest didst deign to be.

This day a daughter of our home
Departs to help another's weal;
All shall be well if Thou wilt come
And on this union set Thy seal.

Teach them to know the marriage tie
Is sacred by divine decree;
If e'er an evil hour be nigh,
O may they shelter find in Thee.

There is no peace the world can give
That can with faith in Thee compare;
No fervour in the soul can live
That has not Christ to bless it there.

So may the husband day by day
Be to the wife a bulwark strong;
Through cloud and sunshine mark the way
With ready smile and cheerful song.

As in the spheres the central sun
Controls the planets in their course,
So may the wifely graces run
And lead the husband to their Source.

Then give Thy blessing, Lord, we pray!
We pray Thee give Thy blessing free,
O guard and guide them all the way
In life and through eternity.

AUNT LIZA—AGED 92

AULD Liza, oor freen', is a winnerfu' cratur,
She rises fu' early, an' sits unco late;
Tho' mair than four score, a' thae years dinna matter,
There's no' mony young anes can auld Liza bate.

She's eident an' thrifty at plannin' an' sewin',
There's no' in Auld Reekie her marrow the noo;
In the gloamin' look in when the tea is a-brewin',
She'll press ye to pree't, like a wee cushie doo.

An' lots o' guid freen's too, an' some 'mong the gent'y,
Will no' see her bate when laid up wi' the cauld;
The doctor himsel' even brings a bit dainty,
An' pawkily says: "Dinna think that ye're auld."

On the banks o' the Nith she was bred a leal maiden,
An' ance lo'ed a laddie, wha died in decline;
But warsled she bravely, her big grief to deaden,
An' ne'er saw anither to marry sin' syne.

For sic winnerfu' love she will yet be rewarded,
An' live in a palace fu' couthie an' braw.
O Liza, thy faith winna pass unregarded
By Him, wha keeps count o' the sparrows that fa'.

Her fingers are noo kin o' stiff wi' rheumatics,
Tho' but for this failin', she's hearty an' weel;
An' aft, when I think o' her hame in the attics,
I'm sure the three figures Auld Liza will seal.

OOR WEE JENNY

WEE JENNY toddles oot an' in,
Says to the bairns, "tak' care,"
E'en tho' we shift the things aboot,
She maun ha'e a' the fluir.

The first day that she set awa'
I'm sure I'll ne'er forget,
Her mither had her dressed fu' braw,
She's sic a little pet.

She toddled but, an' toddled ben,
Frae kitchen to the room,
Then o'er the mat fell on the fluir,
As if she meant to soom.

She's only rising sixteen months,
An' yet she sups her lane,
She kicks an' screams to get the spoon,
She's sic an awfu' wean.

If I should ask, "wha she likes best,"
She looks as if in shame,
Then whispers, nestlin' to my side,
"Papa, 'hen he tomes 'ame."

She's Bessie's pet when sweets are gaun,
An' Bella's when she's bad,
At nicht she cuddles to her ma,
Says, "illie is my 'ad."

Then ma will hear her prayer: "This night,
I lay—me doun—to s'leep—
I pray"—(she's fairly dune)—"I pray—
The Lord—my soul—to teep, Amen!"

JEAN

Kirk o' Moor Annual Preaching, first Sunday in August.

THERE'S a break abune the Ochils, Jean,
A mist below Polmaise;
Mak' haste, the day will yet be fine,
Put on your Sunday claes.

For we maun to the Kirk o' Moor
As ance we did lang syne,
Ye mind! that while the preacher spoke
Your haun' was clasped in mine.

We'll see the dear auld trystin' stane
In yonder hallowed spot,
Whaur rest the weary frae their toil,
An' bickerin's are forgot.

We'll hear the peesweip's doleful cry,
Like traveller's eerie tale,
Anon the laverock's heavenly sang
Resoundin' through the vale.

An' there dark Carron rumblin' rins,
As ony poet's dream,
Thus far the Roman foes micht gang,
But no' across this stream.

An' mind ye o' the heather, Jean,
I laced amang your hair,
An' a' the vows we made that day,
When ye were young an' fair?

JEAN

Vile slander in an ill spun tale
Aye finds a ready ear,
An' nane can stop the mischief dune,
Or check the fa'in' tear.

Then youth an' folly kens nae law,
I thocht your love grew cauld,
An' oh! to feel I then was wrang,
Noo that I'm grey an' auld.

For I hae wandered far since then,
An' mony countries seen,
An' maidens fair, an' rich, an' gay,
But nane like thee, my Jean!

I'm wae to think that a' the past
Has cost sae mony tears;
But, Jean, we'll try an' mak' amends
Through a' the coming years.

Then cheer thee up, my ain dear lass,
This truth can never die,
Sic love as your's an' mine, my Jean,
Is registered on high.

Sae we will to the Kirk o' Moor,
Put on your Sunday claes,
There's a break abune the Ochils,
An' a mist below Polmaise.

WINSOME JEAN

'Twas at a Hansel Monday spree
I lost my heart or head;
For there a strapping lass, I ween,
A conquest o' me made.

We drew cuts wha should see her hame,
I prayed to get the cast,
The fates seemed a' against me then,
For I was left the last.

At early morn I turned me hame,
But sleep ne'er closed my een,
I rowed an' tum'led in my bed
An' sighed for winsome Jean.

Then swift a letter brief I penned,
Declared my love to be
Firm as a rock, surrounded by
The deep an' trackless sea!

But oh! she scorned my loving note
An' threw it in the fire;
At ance this roused my manly heart,
An' wauken'd a' my ire.

An' made me vow the day would come
She'd rue her hasty act;
An' after five-an'-twenty years
I'm telt this was the fact.

An' is it true ye're sorry, Jean,
Ye didna hear my tale?
Methinks 'twas better far for me
That I was left to wail.

WINSOME JEAN

But then perchance I may be wrang,
Tho' sure am I o' this,
'Twas pride that was your stumbling block
An' made ye Willie miss.

An' ne'er a man has speired your price,
Noo, Jean, this is your due,
For a' the men that e'er ye kent
Nane suited ye, I knew.

Ye mind that nicht, my dainty lass,
Ye kept me in the snaw?
I stood an' glow'ed my een 'maist oot,
But ne'er cam' ye ava.

Whene'er I think on yon cauld nicht
My heart still seems to loup,
Until the voice o' reason says:
"Ye were a muckle gowk."

Now I've a wife, as weel ye ken,
As big an' braw a quean,
As ever lo'ed an honest man,
Or shared his bed at e'en.

But just to show I bear nae spleen
I thocht I'd let ye ken,
That I can still haud up my head
Among my brither men.

An' maidens a' tak' my advice,
An' dinna look owre high,
Or maybe ye'll be left like Jean,
In your auld age to sigh.

MARY

O MARY, mind ye o' the time
Oor guileless hearts were blithe an' young?
When wooin' 'neath yon spreadin' lime
We felt what neither said nor sung;
Or roun' the dykes when gloamin' grey
Was creepin' owre the Coxithill,*
The licht o' love made nicht like day
An' served twa couthie hearts to fill.

Fair beauty decked thy winsome broo,
An' love blinked in thy bonny ee,
Whilk aye thy soul kept keekin' thro'
An' gied a warl' o' joy to me.
Thy life was pure as virgin snaw
New fa'en frae oot the lift abune,
An' tho' lang years hae flown awa',
Thy heart is still as leal within.

Unchanged art thou, O Mary dear,
On a' thy charms I fondly dwell,
Nae grief that brings the saut, saut tear,
Can dim the lustre o' thyself!
An' tho' we've wandered far apart,
Yet o' thy love I think nae shame;
How deep the yearnin' in my heart
Whene'er I muse on thy dear name!

Then Mary, think ye on the time
When innocent, an' blithe, an' young,
An' haun' in haun' aneath the lime
We dreamt o' bliss, unsaid, unsung;
The merlin's sang upon the thorn
Re-echoes thy sweet voice to me:
O wae's-the-day that I should mourn
My early love, for thee; for thee!

*The Field of Bannockburn.

GALLOWA' BESS

THE leaves were fa'in aff the trees
That day I gaed to see Glenluce,
An' famed McNally wi' his bees,
An' stay a' nicht within his hoose.

The flo'ers were faded an' awa',
A' Nature seemed to be at rest,
But yet within McNally's ha'
There blooms a flo'er, 'tis Nature's best.

I've seen the dewdrap on the thorn
Distillin' wi' the summer's sun,
I've heard the lintie's sang at morn
An' blackbird's when the day was done.

But in yon lone sequestered spot,
Far frae the haunts o' toil and care,
Lives Bessie, dressed in drugget coat,
Wi' rosy cheeks an' gowden hair.

Her ee is like a drap o' dew
That sparkles in the sun, I ween;
In a' Glenluce I'm sure there's few
That can wi' guileless Bess be seen.

Frae early morn till late at e'en
She's waitin' on the honey bee;
A fairer form, mair comely queen,
In Gallowa' there canna be.

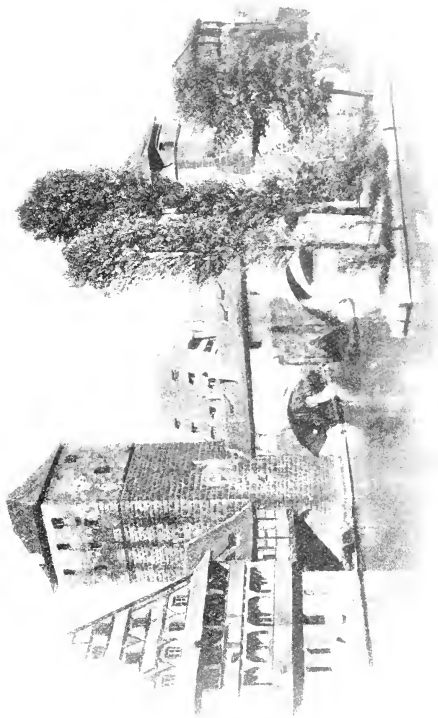
GALLOWA' BESS

The bees a' ken her gentle step
An' hum aroon' her day by day,
As oot they pass frae ilka skep
Then hasten to the hills away.

Then hie ye, lads o' Gallowa',
Or ony ither county roun',
Gang doon an' gie this Bess a ca',
Ye'll find in her a priceless boon.

IV

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR



NUREMBERG.

Then all at once, a city stood amidst a fertile plain,
Through which the silent Pegnitz flowed, once cumbered with the slain.

NUREMBERG: A VISION

Christmas, 1904

It was a dream; and far away o'er land and sea I sped,
As wafted by a power unseen, and by a Vision led.
In flowing robes so passing fair, with eyes of azure blue,
She beckoned me as with a spell and look that pierced
me through;
Then, all at once, a city stood amidst a fertile plain,
Through which the silent Pegnitz flowed, once cumbered
with the slain;
“Behold old Nuremberg,” she said, “And these the
Cannon Towers,
And all around the ancient moat, now lined with trees
and flowers,
Where once, three hundred years ago, men looked to
heaven and sighed,
And struggled for the days of peace, and fought, and
bled, and died;
And towering high above the walls, a castle cold and
stern
Looks down in mockery of time, that all true men
might learn
They pass away as autumn flowers, that only leave
behind
The mem'ry of their fragrance sweet, embalmed upon
the mind.
This grim old castle here has stood a misty thousand
years,
And witnessed tyranny and death, and ruthless spoils
and tears.”
At this the Vision waved her arm, and beckoned me
to come
And view the relics of old Time, in this grey feudal
home:

NUREMBERG

“ Here in this chamber, where you stand, this iron cage
 behold,
These instruments of torture, too, ‘ The Maiden ’ grim
 and cold
To take you in her arms was death, this maid of surly
 mood,
Then drop you down two hundred feet into the river’s
 flood;
A cradle lined with iron spikes like spines of porcupine;
And studded chair in mockery, where culprits sat to
 dine;
All this was done in God’s fair name to save the souls
 of men.”
So said my guide, and I was glad the times had
 changed since then.
We hurried from the tragic den, and gazed across the
 vale;
The setting sun, in calm and peace, gave pathos to
 my wail;
The soft blue eyes like diamonds shone, while words
 of vapour breath
Were whispered, “ Sire, now all is changed, hushed as
 the sleep of death; ”
And hark! sweet music of the spheres resounded in
 mine ear;
I asked, “ Is this a song of praise and gladness that
 I hear? ”
“ Ah! this is Christmas Eve,” she said; Lo! how the
 music swells,
The air is filled with spirit song, the city’s old church
 bells
Vibrate in unison and love! devout I gazed on high;
I only saw the old church towers stand out against
 the sky,

NUREMBERG

The ramparts crumbled into dust, as up in Heaven's
dome,
I read the legend in the stars of "Love, and Peace,
and Home"!
The Vision cried in pleading voice, "Go! let all con-
flicts cease!
For men should know and understand this is the reign
of Peace!
You cannot serve great God on high, He is beyond
your ken,
But you can feed the hungry child, and help your
fellow-men;
This was the message of the Christ two thousand years
ago,
And He gave up His life to prove this is the Truth
to know;
Do this in love, and joy supreme shall be your earthly
part,
The Great Eternal Spirit yours, for Heaven is in your
heart."
So spake my guide, and waved adieu; the city's old
church towers,
The fountains, bridges, battlements, the moat, the trees,
the flowers,
All faded from my waning sight, the music ceased to
swell,
The last faint sound as I awoke was, "Love and Peace
—Farewell."

THE HAPPY LAND

Christmas, 1902

“THERE is a happy land”
Was sung in church to-day;
It echoed through the portals wide,
And rose and fell like surging tide;
Up through the vaulted roof it rang,
Until methought the angels sang
“There is a happy land,”
But ah! “Far, far away.”

“There is a happy land,”
Kept ringing in mine ear,
As out into the busy street
I passed—and saw the naked feet
Of children shivering in the snow,
Oh! can it be the angels know
In yonder happy land
That children shiver here?

“Should not ‘the happy land’
Be with us every day,”
I asked; when lo! a shaft from heaven
Revealed the truth, like rock that’s riven
I seemed to see the angels bend,
And to the shivering children tend—
Behold a smiling land,
Ye Christians who obey.

THE HAPPY LAND

Thus make "a happy land,"
Where each shall have his due;
Let forms all cease, let silence reign!
Turn to thy work, remove the stain;
Singing is vain, and preaching too,
When there is something still to do,
To change this barren land,
By actions kind and true.

This is "the happy land!"
Resound it far and wide!
As in a vision, now I see
A semblance of what is to be;
When "Feed my lambs," as Jesus said,
Shall be the text—the burden laid
On all throughout the land
Who take the Christ as guide.

In yonder blessed land,
Where Jordan's waters roll,
The shepherds ushered in the morn
On which the Prince of Peace was born,
Proclaiming "Love," that ought to be
The rule of life for you, for me;
Now heaven's divine command
We joyfully extol.

Behold "a happy land,"
When all our wranglings cease;
This message was the angel's song
That sounded Bethlehem's plains along,
From twinkling stars its radiance shone,
And shall re-echo from the throne
Till men united stand
In purity and peace.

A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT

“Thy actions, and thy actions alone, determine thy will.”—FICHTE.

'Tis often in a little thought
A germ of truth is found,
It ne'er can be in raising self
True riches shall abound.

A little thought, from whence it comes,
'Tis difficult to say;
But surely it is born of power,
To show the perfect way.

The Master came long years ago,
And taught us what to do,
But evidence is all around
That this is done by few.

And so we thus have wretchedness,
With its attendant woe;
How many seem to strive in vain
To fight this bitter foe!

For those who struggle after wealth,
By craft and greed and spoil,
Still think they do a God-like thing
To give men leave to toil.

The few who *have*, do not His will;
The many starve and pine;
But they are taught that by and by
In heaven they yet shall dine.

A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT

The system's wrong—you know it is
If you but pause and think;
Not till we change and bury self
Will all injustice sink.

Then hail the truth this Christmas morn,
And act without delay;
The Christ within suggests the thought—
“Do this for Me to-day.”

CHRISTMAS CAROL

MAY thy life be as the morning
Of a day in brightest June,
And a light thy brow adorning,
With a heart that beats in tune.

Sorrow leave thee now for ever,
Joy alone thy portion be,
From thy store be thou a giver,
Bliss will thus abide with thee.

These are wishes all may cherish
On this blessed Christmas morn,
All our puny thoughts should perish
On the day our Lord was born.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

1899

IN the stillness of the midnight,
When the world is hushed in sleep,
Musing, gazing, longing, waiting,
Here I silent vigil keep.

Hark! a sound disturbs the silence,
Chiming like a wedding bell,
Sweetly, softly, in the starlight—
Tinkle! tinkle!—"All is well!"

Tinkle! tinkle!—am I dreaming?
Thought on thought comes crowding fast,
Now methinks I see a city
Far away in distant past.

Tinkle! tinkle!—in a manger,
Lo! a little baby lay
With a halo round His forehead,
Portent of the coming day.

Tinkle! tinkle!—all is glory!
God has measured with a span
Through the vastness of Creation—
He reveals Himself in man.

Tinkle! tinkle!—peace proclaiming!
Throbbing hearts responsive swell,
Great I AM, and man united,
Storm the worldly citadel.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Tinkle! tinkle!—perfect manhood!
Yet, behold, the same art thou!
Image of the Great Eternal
Stamped upon thy forehead now.

Tinkle! tinkle!—'tis not finished!
There is work that must be done;
Help to build this mighty fabric
With thy good deeds, one by one.

Tinkle! tinkle!—but in measure
Can we know what we should do;
Keep our conscience, never trifle,
Seek the good, and that pursue.

Tinkle! tinkle!—in the stillness
May the germ abide in thee,
Pure in love, in life, in spirit,
Man is God's affinity!

GREETING

In all you feel, and say, and do,
In all your hopes, this thought pursue:
To have an Ideal man was meant,
God gave him one when Christ was sent.

THE VESPER BELLS

Christmas, 1901

'Twas in a little German town,
The vesper bells were ringing,
The Autumn leaves in grey and brown,
Still to the trees were clinging.

A quaint, old-fashioned, Gothic inn,
Where merry souls were quaffing
The nut-brown ale, as I passed in,
Attracted by the laughing.

A quiet-looking German maid
The reaming jugs was filling—
A buxom damsel, stout and staid,
That set my heart a-thrilling.

"What means the silence, gentle maid?"
The men had ceased their singing;
"'Tis evening prayers, sir," she said—
The bells again were ringing.

They doffed their caps and bowed their heads,
Then crossed themselves and waited,
While one began to count his beads,
With countenance elated.

The faces shone with sacred fire,
That in each heart was burning,
A peaceful, holy, calm desire
Of wayward ones returning.

THE VESPER BELLS

The inn became a holy shrine,
The bells were angels singing,
And nut-brown ale—the sacred wine—
The maiden had been bringing.

“ O waft, ye gentle zephyrs, waft
Across the German Ocean,
And on mine erring heart ingraft
Yon hidden fire’s emotion.”

And musing thus, methinks I hear
Yon old church bells a-ringing,
They seem to say, “ Dry every tear,
And join the angels singing.”

For why! is this not Christmas Eve?
The past with all its sadness
Has been refined, as through a sieve,
To fill the world with gladness.

CHRISTMAS GREETING

THE merry peal of the old Church bells,
The old, old Christmas story tells;
Rejoice, my friend, when Christ was born,
And do good deeds this Christmas morn.

NATURE'S THOUGHT

"Nature is always right, and most profoundly so just there where we least comprehend her."—GOETHE.

I STOOD and watched, as in a dream,
Beside a burn—a purling stream—
 That hurried to the sea;
And, as I gazed and listened long,
This was the burden of the song
 It seemed to sing to me.

"Know thou, O man, a secret thought
Unfolds in Nature all unsought,
 And seeks a higher home;
It clothes the fields with verdure green,
That sparkles with a living sheen,
 And shimmers as sea foam.

"It seeks the soul of life to mate,
Æons of time perchance to wait,
 Accomplishing its ends;
The flower that by the wayside grows,
Whose fragrance from its petals flows,
 To higher form ascends.

"The butterfly and toiling bee
Disclose a mystery to thee
 In God's creative plan;
So incarnated life appears,
And struggles on, through toil and tears,
 To reach the plane of man.

NATURE'S THOUGHT

"Man, greatest in evolving life,
Seeks freedom from the throes of strife,
Nor must he strive in vain;
Apart from all he has to show,
Is it impossible to know
That he may live again?"

"For lo! two thousand years ago,
There came a Man, pure as the snow,
And beautified by love;
Was His the secret thought to give
Incentive to the souls that live
On earth, and not above?"

Awakened from my reverie,
I looked around, but still by me
Was heard the brooklet's song;
"I travel on to join my mate,
Fulfil a plan, and not a fate—
An item in the throng.

"The height to which man cares to rise
May be attained by him who tries,
And inner truth reveres;
Then, listen to the voice within,
Discard the wrong, the strife, the din,
And gladden all the years!"

A PASSING WORD FOR NEW YEAR'S MORN

1897

THE bitin' wind o' Winter snell
Is groanin' like an agèd seer,
As though he rang the funeral knell
At pairtin' wi' the closing year.

Auld Time suggests a retrospect,
A summin' up o' a' that's dune;
The credit side we may neglect,
But debits maun we enter in.

Ilk' little act in life we note
Can preach a sermon o' itsel';
Then see ye ha'e nae cank'rin spot,
Lest it against your future tell.

At morn a tiny drap o' dew
On ilka spike o' grass that hings,
Will silently implant anew
The life o' purity it brings.

The grains of sand in desert wide
Into a heap by winds are blawn,
An' there for ages doth abide—
In ways like this the worlds are sawn.

A fallen tree that withered lay
Beside a burn that purlin' pass'd,
Smybolic o' Dame Nature's way,
Wi' bleak December's surly blast.

A PASSING WORD FOR NEW YEAR'S MORN

Thae animating thochts I send,
Altho' they be in faulty rhyme,
May gie the hint, nane should pretend
To stay the march o' fleetin' time.

The wealth o' God will mak' ye rich,
An' satisfy the inner mind;
Then gie your neighbour freend a hitch
In helpin' him this truth to find.

An' may your cupboard ne'er be bare,
Throughout the year o' ninety-eight,
That ye may ha'e a bite to spare
To a' the puir wha on ye wait.

CHRISTMAS GREETING

MAY the beautiful snow be a type to you
Of the life that is pure, and sweet, and true;
For this was the lesson Christ came to show
In the lowly manger long years ago.

CHRISTMAS GREETING

WE live in hope, like an anchor cast,
Deep in the sands of time made fast;
As the heaving ship in the swelling sea
Lets slip the anchor, and we are free;
But fast or free may peace abide
In your heart and home this Christmas tide.

LITTLE THINGS

A New Year's Greeting, 1903

WE ought to watch the little things
That crowd our minds to-day,
To-morrow they have passed to swell
The thoughts that are away.

We seldom value little things
Like pearly drops of dew,
That hang upon the heather-bell
And give it life and hue.

The little flowers that deck the fields
And scent the balmy air,
How lovely! yet how incomplete
Were not the daisy there!

Far up among the rugged bens
That in the sunlight's glow,
The drops of rain, now trickling rills,
Now mighty torrents flow.

The little word at random said
May often leave a sting,
Whereas the thought that is matured
Should always comfort bring.

Our little words of sympathy
Will cheer the drooping heart,
And deeds of kindness to the sick
Take from a wound its smart.

LITTLE THINGS

'Tis semblance of the higher life
In loving deeds to grow,
They spread a sweetness in the world
And prove the truth we know.

As moments make the hours we pass,
Thus use them as a seer,
For wisdom crowns the man at last
And brings a glad New Year.

CHRISTMAS GREETING

THIS Christmas Day I send a greeting,
Tho' miles of space do intervene;
And tho' old Time is ever fleeting,
Thy image in my heart is green.

OUR HOPE

1909

"Above the cloud with its shadow is the star with its light."—
VICTOR HUGO.

AGAIN we reach the closing year,
And pause to measure out the road;
Is all its joy and sorrow gone,
And are we nearer truth and God?

Turmoil and war, and want and woe,
Evoke the sympathetic tear;
And there are men who strive to show
There is no guiding hand to steer.

There is a power—from whence it comes
Hath ne'er been given man to know—
Without its aid to lead us on
The soul is starved that seeks to grow.

In Nature's chamber-house of lore
There is no void frail man can trace;
The vaulted sky, the twinkling stars
Tell us there is no end to space.

And time, that mellows grief and care—
The azure past, and still to be—
No limit hath the soul who soars
In tune with God's infinity.

OUR HOPE

The rising sun the morning cloud
Dissolves, anon to reappear;
So man, in an ethereal form
Shall change to fill another sphere.

The swelling sea whose billows roll,
Then lap the silent shore in peace,
Recedes and flows, that we may learn
Nature and man shall never cease.

For man's a unit of the life,
A part of the eternal whole,
Expanding by the spirit's power
Until he is a perfect soul.

We live to grow; then may each one
Worship in silence and alone;
And He who rules the universe
Will show us His eternal throne.

May Hope, the anchor of the soul,
Inspire all men to be sincere;
Then war, and want, and woe shall cease,
And we shall have a glad New Year!

TIME

A New Year's Greeting, 1898

TIME is like a mighty river,
Flowing onward night and day,
Broad'ning in its course, but never
We its mighty force can stay.

On its bosom, fast advancing
Fleets are borne by wind and tide,
O'er the raging billows, prancing
Like war horses in their pride.

Or, in Spring, when earth is teeming,
Joy pervades the earth and air,
All the face of Nature beaming
As she plants her seed with care.

Thoughtless men transplant a seedling,
Never dreaming it may rot,
Or, perchance, in time a weedling
Will arise to mark the spot.

What an awful consummation—
Spend a life to plant a seed!
At the end what consternation
When they find 'tis but a weed!

Such are ever record making,
Here a notch, and there a pin,
Hurry, scurry, God forsaking,
Fleeting shadows all they win.

TIME

Words are futile, silence golden,
Deeds in time will be the test,
When we know, and keep withholding,
Stinted are our joys at best.

Creeds are far too oft profession,
Empty sound, and nothing more;
Deeds betoken real possession,
Metal of the purest ore.

When with care our hearts are sinking,
And we murmur on the road,
Look within, begin a-thinking,
Thus we hear the voice of God.

Step by step we reach perfection,
Joy is ours if up we climb,
Retrograde, we court dejection,
Sinking deeper in the slime.

Hark! the midnight hour is striking,
Gone the year for good or ill,
Stand erect, the morn is breaking,
Onward, upward, if we will.

NEW-YEAR GREETINGS

YOUR frien' o' Auld Lang Syne's been thinkin'
In hirplin' rhyme he'd like to send
A "Here's to ye"—withoot the drinkin'
That brings nae comfort in the end.
He hopes ye hae a weel-filled larder,
That business yields a balance clear,
An' that ye noo may find it harder
To pass the puir this glad New Year.

THE ills that are past may you cease to remember;
Keep looking ahead through the shade and the shine;
And over a pipe as I sit by the fender,
I wish every blessing this year to be thine.

A cosy bield may ye ne'er lack
Throughout the year ilk' step ye tak',
An' may your coag be lippin' fu'
When ye begin the year anew.

TRIALS are comforts oft in disguise,
Hope is an anchor flung from the skies;
Unfurl your sails for the sky is clear,
And steer for the port this glad New Year.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

1910

"He most lives who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best."

—F. J. BAILEY.

FOR the brotherhood of man
Are we doing all we can?
Is the question that is uppermost with all;
While we pause to get reply,
We can hear the children cry,
And the very air re-echoes back the call.

We are anxious they should be
Ready for Eternity,
And the present time is ours to give them heed;
But there's something in the way,
And we live within its sway;
So we cannot give the time the questions need.

Can there be in Nature's law
A peculiar twist or flaw?
For it seems that each is centred in himself,
And this system has obtained
Through the ages; it has gained
Until everything is sacrificed for self.

A community of thought
Is essential to be sought,
Concentrating on the needs of all the race;
So disseminate the wealth,
As to give the nations health,
And thus bring a happy smile to every face.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

It is man who has the twist,
For he's living in a mist,
And he will not use the power that God has given;
But he must amend the law,
Let it be without a flaw,
And the earth will then become a very heaven.

If he keeps an open mind,
I am very sure he'll find
He will never need to strain his ears to hear;
For the "still, small," inner voice,
If its leading be his choice,
Will direct him with a message that is clear.

It is difficult to know
How he otherwise should grow,
But for meanness, and contrariness, and might;
For the spirit-power within
Will instruct him how to win
All the bliss that comes to one who does the right.

So bethink you, gentle friend,
This is living to an end,
For no sacrifice is worth without a tear;
Put your shoulder to the wheel,
Do it for your brother's weal,
And a blessing will be yours throughout the year.

A LEAF OF IVY

1907

ONLY an ivy leaf,
Is it now dead?
Fallen from ruined wall,
Seeking a bed.

Thus have I picked it up,
Gathered for you;
Emblem of friendship rare,
Constant and true.

Now with the dying year
Bury the past,
And on this ivy leaf
All your thoughts cast.

Speaks it of life to you,
Never to fade;
For it is ever green,
This ivy blade.

Down from the ruined wall,
Riches to find;
Rest in another bed,
Deep in your mind.

What life has given you,
Share it with others;
Heaven will be with us here,
When men are brothers.

A LEAF OF IVY

Come now, obey the call,
Spread out your hand;
Scatter your treasure store
Over the land.

Only deeds matter now,
Give others cheer;
Then shall you happy be
This bright New Year.

CHRISTMAS CAROL

BLEST Christmas hath an holy shrine,
Then hasten, friend, and make it thine,
Within its portals Christ is seen,
And knows full well what thou hast been.

In all thy troubles, doubts, and fears,
Alone He is the One who cheers,
Gives comfort to the aching mind,
With peace to thee, and all mankind.

The gladsome bells peal forth their song,
To cheer thee forward in the throng,
Just as thou art, then come away,
And thou wilt bless this Christmas Day.

A SCRAP O' VENEER

1895

Printed on veneer shaped as a panel after Louis XV. style.

THE auld year is gane wi' its sorrow an' care,
An' I'm very hard up, an' hae naething to spare
To send ye a greetin' befitin' your rank,
Done up on fine paper, like what's in a bank:
But my guid-will an' wishes are yours, wi' a tear,
Tho' printed on this wee bit scrap o' veneer.

This emblem o' mine is a sign o' the times—
Man's chief aim the noo is to scoop in the dimes—
But riches tak' wings, and they aft flee awa;
Tak' a freen'ly advice—set your back to the wa',
Mak' the law tha' is golden your practice an' creed,
An' each deed o' kindness will drop like a seed
Deep doon in the hearts o' the folk that ye ken,
An' mak' ye reverēd an' respected o' men.

The genuine article's ne'er covered o'er,
Like a sham wi' veneer, while it's bad at the core;
We a' should be solid, substantial, an' true,
Discardin' deceit in the year that is new:
Awa' wi' a' bickerin', ill-will, an' strife,
An' blessings attend ye the rest o' your life.

CHRISTMAS GREETING

MAY Peace and Prosperity bloom like the rose
In your home this Natal Day,
And its fragrance sweet be a moral to keep
Your feet in the Heavenward way.

HOPE FOR THE TO BE

1911

“Hope springs exulting on triumphant wing.”—BURNS.

WHEN Winter comes with biting blast,
And darkness clouds the sky,
We muse in comfort, and lament
That poverty is nigh.

But hope dispels our many fears,
And leads us on to know,
If we but ponder o'er the past,
Philosophy will grow.

The progress that the world has made
Is measured by a span;
The onward weary march is slow
To reach the ideal man.

'Tis like a mighty swollen stream
That hurries to the sea;
It passes on, yet changes not,
While struggling to be free.

With teeming wealth on every side,
Enough for all; yet why
Should misery and pain abound,
And many starve and die?

'Tis all because man wayward is,
To God and self untrue,
The victim of a selfish creed
That bliss is for the few.

HOPE FOR THE TO BE

But 'tis not so; a peace serene
Might reign in every heart;
Obey the inner call to-day,
Let each one do his part.

Behold! another New Year's morn;
Then try to follow on
The rugged and the thorny road
The Master trod alone.

CHRISTMAS GREETING

THEY who forget the friends of youth
Have lived in vain, and know not truth;
In all your dealings seek to know
The friendships made long years ago;
And so this Christmas day I send
The hearty greetings of a friend.

CHRISTMAS GREETING

MAY Christmas shine
With a radiance divine
In your home this Natal Day;
The desire of a friend,
Who, in joy, doth send
A wish, that ye meet in the way—
"The poor that are mine
Should also be thine,"
Said the Christ of this Christmas Day.

TO MR G——, WHO URGED ME TO SEND OUT A
CHRISTMAS CARD AS FORMERLY

My dear friend Green, 'tis clearly seen,
You love my verse alone,
Your smile I know will come and go
When I am dead and gone.

My verse is me, that I can see—
Your letter makes it plain;
Another gem? I hope, a-hem!
To send you once again.

But I'm afraid, it may be said
'Tis not my best by miles,
Perhaps I'm wrong, though quite as strong
To win the Muse with smiles.

The compliment you now have sent
I cherish and admire;
'Tis good to know there is below
A kind soul to inspire.

You have the gift to give a lift,
And that is given to few,
But ah! the joy is real, my boy,
When giver's heart is true.

Doubtless you think, some men may wink
And say, "Just fancy him,"
But off it goes, 'mong friends or foes,
So let it sink or swim.

V
DEDICATIONS



TO A SNAWDRAP

WEE droopin' snawdrap peerin' thro'
Thy winter bed like drap o' dew,
To welcome in the spring anew
 Wi' cheerin' smile,
'Mang a' the flo'ers there's nane like you
 Can me beguile.

When keekin' thro' thy coat o' snaw,
Dost thou no' lonely feel ava,
And wish that thou wert far awa
 Across the sea,
Whaur feathery palms an' orchids braw
 Delight the ee?

When John Frost hauds thee in the earth,
Wi' black, uncanny grip like death,
Bereft art thou o' funeral wreath
 O' sympathy,
But we, puir mortals, at oor hearth
 Will mourn wi' thee.

Thou harbinger o' early Spring,
Thy petals white new joys do bring,
An' a' oor ills they fairly ding
 Oot o' oor head,
Wi' lightsome hearts we noo can sing,
 The winter's dead.

An' draigled bairnies on the street,
That wander thro' the snaw and sleet,
It breaks my heart to see them greet,
 An' hear their wail;
But see them rin wi' willin' feet
 To bid thee hail.

TO A SNAWDRAP

An' noo the cheery lark will sing
His sang o' praise on soarin' wing,
Until the hills an' valleys ring
 Wi' very joy,
To see thy head uncovering
 Sae sweet an' coy.

When we draw near a throne o' grace,
And past misdeeds seek to efface,
Then, like thysel', we'll hide oor face
 Wi' lowly mien,
And He wha kens oor hearts will trace
 What we hae been.

Fareweel, thou gem o' purity,
'Mang a' thy mates ye bear the gree,
Wi' hingin' head, an' dooncast ee,
 An' petals sma',
Tell us a queen thou aye wilt be
 Among them a'.

TO THE POET WILLIAM THOMSON

Born, 1860; died, 1883

SWEET bard, I long to know thee more,
To read thy lays and ponder o'er
Their beauty; for, like rippling stream,
They flow along in ev'ry theme;
And grave or gay, they are sublime
And full of power with perfect rhyme,
"The maister and the bairns," I see,
In lowly cot far o'er the sea.
Thy mystic mind hath wrought a spell,
For hearts to love and tongues to tell;
You sang to sweeten all the road
And turn the wanderer to God,
To make him loathe the path of sin
And from a world of ceaseless din,
To snatch as from a tongue of fire
The wayward lost in self desire.

Dear bard, I fain would ask, O why
Decree went forth that thou must die,
Ere gentle love, like summer's sun
Had warmed thy breast, made two as one;
Before I met thee in the flesh,
Before thou could'st my mind refresh,
Before we knew each other's name,
Before the muse from Heaven came,
Before she dwelt within my breast—
Or has she come at thy behest—

To finish what thou had'st begun?
If so, thy work is not yet done.
O may she come and guide my pen!
And give thy thoughts and mine to men,
Though here I cannot meet with thee,
For thou art not, yet I can see
Thy presence now with mystic mind;
And all that thou hast left behind
Will be incentive thee to meet
Within my home or on the street;
Then come to-day, be near my heart,
And in my work bear thou a part.

Perchance I may commune with thee
When in the woods beside the sea;
Or when I hear the lantie sing
On hazel bush in early spring,
Or when I watch the soaring lark
Outspread his wings, till like a spark
In lift afar, he doth appear,
By this I'll know that thou art near,
And in the thrilling song on high,
Thy voice's cadence wafted nigh,
Then shall we sweet communion hold,
Far more to me than mine of gold.

We may not meet, as I have said,
Beside the brook or sea or glade;
But death shall come one day, and free
I'll soar away to meet with thee.

TO MY MITHER

OH! mind ye o' the time, Mither,
When needin' a' your care,
Before I reached my Faither's knee
Or kaim'd my tousie hair.

Ah! thae were happy days, Mither,
I mind wi' sister Nell,
We couried roon' the winter fire
To hear ye stories tell.

An' ance I fair rebel'd, Mither,
An' widna gang to schule,
Ye said, "Gin I would vex ye thus
I'd surely grow a fule."

But as I grew in years, Mither,
My knowledge grew apace,
Then smiles would play upon your cheek
An' gladden your dear face.

Then tenderly ye took, Mither,
My sisters an' mysel',
Aroun' your knee aye ilka nicht
An' to us a' would tell,

That God lo'es every bairn, Mither,
The rich as weel's the puir,
An' o' His wisdom an' His grace
Wants ilka ane to share.

TO MY MITHER

Ye tauld us 'boot the stars, Mither,
In winter I hae seen
Ye tak' the bairns an' me ootside
To watch them frae the green.

But noo we're a' awa', Mither,
Ane's cross'd the borderland,
An' waitin' on the ither side
To tak' ye by the hand.

My Faither and yoursel', Mither,
Are growin' auld and dune,
But God cares for the leal an' true,
In His grand hame abune.

Then may the licht o' love, Mither,
Shine on your checker'd way,
An' join us hand in hand, Mither,
A lang, an endless day.

WRITTEN FOR, AND READ AT, THE CELEBRATION
OF MY FATHER AND MOTHER'S
GOLDEN WEDDING

THROUGHOUT a' the years ye hae warsled thegither,
Ye've breasted the waves o' adversity ever,
An' aft when the dregs o' privation ye drank—
The past like a horror, the future a blank,
Save only for hope, that's an anchor to a',
Ye've aye plodded on thro' the time that's awa',
Altho' in the past, when your claes hae been bare,
When wark has been scarce, an' your hearts hae been
sair,

Your bread has been dune, an' the fire in the grate
Has burned itsel' oot, made ye wonder if fate
Was a power in the land, or a sham an' a snare;
But wisdom prevailed, an' then "Never despair"
Has aye been your motto through darkness and licht,
Wi' trustin' in God, Who is great in His micht,
An' mindin' the promise, to him that depends
On the Author of life, He constantly sends
The bite wi' the buffet, the weal wi' the woe,
And wi' you, I am sure, it has ever been so.

Tho' darkness has come, an' has hid like a pall
The glint o' His face, an' grim death made a call,
Tho' deep as the ocean your grief served to show
How high He could lift you out from your woe,
I am sure that the words o' the Scripture ye ken,
An' hae quoted them aft when for ithers to fen,
The seed o' the righteous He ne'er will forsake
A proof o' its truth your ain lives noo I take;

MY FATHER AND MOTHER'S GOLDEN WEDDING

The same mighty hand that has kept ye thegither
For fifty lang years a guid faither an' mither
Has broucht us to see ye, wi' purse fu' o' gold,
An' proves that He minds aye His bairns when they're
old;

Your bairns are a' weel, an' a joy to your heart,
An' each in the wide world is daein' his pairt,
They look to ye noo, an' they wish ye baith weel,
An' these tributes o' love wi' devotion would seal.
We pray that the future like days that are past
Be brimfu' wi' blessin's an' joy to the last,
An' then, after a' has been said an' is dune,
When the roll has been called, an' you're summoned
abune,

May ye see the Lord's face wi' a great lustre shine,
And hear His kind words, "Come, ye ever were mine."

THE FOLLOWING VERSES EMBODY MY FATHER'S
REPLY

WE come to gie ye comfort noo,
To cheer an' mak' ye smile,
To sit beside the dear auld hearth
An' crack wi' ye awhile.

An' hear ye tell o' days gane by,
O' love when ye were young,
An' gin the years that's interven'd
Hae mony changes brung.

* * * *

"Ou aye, my man," my faither said,
"Your mither kens hersel',
That ance wi' pitcher in her haun
I met her at the well.

"I whispered o' the future bricht,
An' gin she would be mine;
She blushed, but didna say she would,
Nor hisna dune sin syne.

"But in the water clear I saw
The twinkle o' her ee,
Tho' fifty years hae come an' gane,
That twinkle still I see.

"We sat, I'm sure, a strucken 'oor
When she the silence broke,
Od, Sandy man, ye silly cuif,
I've draigled a' my frock.'

"We rose to gang, my head was licht,
I thought I maist could flee,
As to her faither aff I set
To consummate my glee.

MY FATHER'S REPLY

“ An' brawly for oor years are we,
An' unco weel content,
An' tho' we've had oor bickerin's
Nae ill was ever meant.

“ ‘ Let not the sun gang doon upon
Your wrath,’ the Scriptures say,
We aye hae tried to keep this text
Before us ilka day.

“ We've had oor share o' ups an' doons,
An' mony changes seen,
But, on the whole, we baith can say
We've gey an' happy been.

“ Oor jubilee has come the nicht
Oor hair is white as snaw,
Oor hearts are rinnin' owre wi' joy—
An' welcome to ye a'.”

* * * *

We're gled to hear o' youthfu' days,
An' gratefu' that ye ken
That few are wed for fifty years
Among the sons o' men.

What tho' your hair be white as snaw
Your step be short an' slow,
The peace o' God ye hae within
The heart—His throne below.

An' as ye dauner doon the brae
I see your bosoms swell,
That noo your pitcher's lippin' fu'
Returning frae the well

TO MISS M—— ON THE OCCASION OF HER
MARRIAGE

I BLESS thee, tho' my gift be sma'—
An' may the peace, the joy, an' a'
That come doon frae the lift abune
Be thine, sweet maid, week oot, week in.

I wish ye routh o' warldly gear,
An' o' the wedded joys a share,
Your girnèl lippin' fu' o' meal,
An' runnin' owre your coag an' creel,
Your life to be as sweetest hay
That's newly mown in summer day,
A balmy day in leafy June,
Wi' flo'ers in bloom, an' birds in tune

Tak' tent, an' dinna cease to coo
In years to come, as ye dae noo,
A man will aye dae best his pairt,
When his guidwife directs the airt,
A croon upon his head art thou,
Nae secrets keep, an' white thy brow
Shall shine, an' a' the lustre bricht
An' radiance cast will gie him micht,
An' when your hair is white as snaw,
His heart will closer to ye draw.

An' oh! may God attend ye baith,
To keep ye free o' care an' skaith;
A cosy bield ye ne'er will lack,
Wi' Him to guide ilk' step ye tak',
When auld an' frail, when years hae sped,
I'm sure ye'll bless the day ye wed.

GLENIFFER

Dedicated to Mrs C— S—

IN the Autumn, mild October,
The trees were nearly bare,
We wandered forth, twa frien's and I,
To sniff the caller air,

An' view Glenniffer's flo'ery dell,
The haunt o' Tannahill,
The sweetest sang that e'er he heard
Was the music o' its rill.

The brackens and the heather bell
That fringe the mountain's brow,
The leafy beech, the silken birch,
Bring back the poet now.

An' as I muse, methinks I hear
The mavis in the dell
At early morn pipe forth his lay
By the poet's sweet wee well.

The music o' the lintie's sang
Had cheered his lonesome heart,
An' made him wield the mystic wand
O' true poetic art.

An' if again ye jink the kirk,
Gae, seek the poet's shrine,
An' drink the water frae the brook—
'Tis better far than wine.

TO MOLLY, MY DOG

Years hae gane by sin' I was young.
When to the hoose a dog I brung,
A nice wee bick, we ca'd her Moll,
Wha could a rat tak' frae a hole;
Or e'en beside the wimplin' burn
I've sat an' watched her tak a turn
Oot thro' the fields an' o'er the brae
Whaur aften I hae pu'd the slae.
Or on the Bannock's mossy bank
My fill o' Nature I hae drank,
While she would start the speedy hare—
Nor for a word o' mine would care,
As wi' a yelp she aff would flee
In hot pursuit—'twas fun to see
Her loose her feet on ilka rig
Then in the grun' her nose would dig,
An' heads owre heels across the fur
Would rouse a partridge wi' a whurr;
Moll pantin' looked, as aff it flew!
The hare was gane, an' partridge too.
"Come in noo, Molly, come awa',
Ye hav'na dune sae bad ava;"
Moll gied a bark, then to my side
Cam' back wi' glee an' seemin' pride,
Then wagged her tail an' gazed around
As if she knew 'twas classic ground.

There too, sometimes, I courted Bess
Wha lo'ed my little dog nae less

Than did mysel', for she was kind
 An' thocht my doggie had a mind,
 She couldna see that dogs should be
 Shut oot o' Heaven whan they would dee;
 But sae it is, the Scriptures say
 Nae dogs shall see eternal day.
 If kindly heart an' deeds o' love
 Fit man to share the joys above,
 Then here's a dog whose deeds were pure,
 Whose constancy and love were sure.

Eternal life to dogs I'd gie,
 An' nae disgrace I'm sure they'd be
 To earth or heaven, or God, or man,
 Who cheats his fellows when he can,
 A selfish life he lives in ease
 Then at the end himsel' to please
 An' gratify a troubled mind,
 He turns to God in hope to find
 Redemption frae a' vice an' crime
 An' peace wi' Him for a' the time.
 'Tis well the debt for him was paid
 An' retribution freely made,
 When on the cross Christ's life was given
 To satisfy the God o' Heaven;
 For if his claim were deeds o' love
 He ne'er would rise to dwell above.
 I'd rather meet my doggie there,
 Wi' her the joys an' bliss to share
 Than numbers o' my fellow-men
 Whose lives an' deeds, I'm forced to ken,
 Can never bear the licht o' day—
 They never turned the Heavenward way,
 Said kindly word nor gave a mite,
 Or to an orphan child a bite,

But lived for self, for self alone,
An' ate their bread an' picked their bone.

Then to the kirk some like to gang
An' mingle wi' a weel-dressed thrang,
Put big collections in the plate,
Sit in their pew among the great,
An' carry heads high in the air—
A' this they dae an' need nae mair;
An' yet, it may gie fancied strength
Help them to hope for Heaven at length,
An' like a crutch to cripple man
Dae a'thing that a wood-leg can.

To me there's mair that men should want,
An' there is mony as guid a haunt,
Whaur ane can worship God in fear
Withoot a gaping crood to hear.
He loves to hear direct appeals,
An' for oor fauts He truly feels,
He'll gie us help, if to Himsel'
We play the man, oor failin's tell,
Or, kennin' we hae dune oor pairt,
Gang to the Throne wi' earnest heart.
For Jesus said, when we should pray,
To dae it in a private way—
In oor ain hoose, or on the street,
E'en at oor work, such would be meet.
An' a' we need to find Him near,
The humble heart, the fallin' tear,
The poor man's wail, the heavin' sigh,
The burstin' heart, the dooncast eye,
These, by the mountain's bubblin' brook,
In shady glen or grassy nook,
Or by the swellin' river's side,
Or carried on its bosom wide,

TO MOLLY, MY DOG

Where'er we are, His ear is ready,
His mind is clear, His arm is steady—
Let us now stand erect an' be
True men in our entirety.

But to my tale I'll noo return,
An' tell ye how beside the burn
I buried Molly, kind an' true,
An' bade her then a fond adieu;
An' noo when to my hame I turn,
To Molly's grave beside the burn,
I wander forth an' sit an' dream
An' list to music o' the stream,
And Molly's life, so pure an' good—
Such meditation's wholesome food;
Perhaps this dog to me was given
To make me worthier of Heaven.

TO A LADY

NATURE gave thee of her wealth,
Thou wert born to sing,
Thy sweet thrilling silver notes
Comfort to me bring.

And those eyes, those speaking eyes,
Windows of thy soul,
Tell to me thy secret thoughts
Like an open scroll.

TO MR AND MRS B— ON THE OCCASION OF
THEIR SILVER WEDDING

ACCEPT this stick, my worthy freen',
Jist as the sma'est token,
For five-an'-twenty years ye've been
A joy to me unbroken.

Thro' a' the ups an' doons o' life
Ye've had your share o' worry,
But never wi' your ain guidwife
Was ony hurry-burry.

Noo gin ye to the market gang,
You tak' this stick aye wi' ye,
'Twill help ye on the road along
An' sturdy freen' be to ye.

When at the sale, to gie a bid
Expose the silver firl,
An' should ye by the crood be hid
Just gie the stick a twirl.

The auctioneer will understand
That ye will aye be willin',
Sae lang's he sees the silver band,
That means anither shillin'.

An' gin ye bring the beastie hame,
An' turn her in to fodder,
In twa three weeks she's no' the same,
But ae five pounds the snodder.

TO MR AND MRS B—

As to your wife, my trusty freen',
May every guid attend her,
The best o' a' her wark is seen
By Him that aye befriends her.

When in the gloamin' o' your life,
An' a' your work is ended,
To cross the ford as man and wife,
Trust Him wi' hand extended.

For bairnies there wi' faces douce,
An' ither freen's that ken ye,
Are waitin' in the Inner Hoose
Wi' angels to atten' ye.

Whaur peace an' joy within the door
Is shared by a' in common,
Nae darkness there, but evermore
A day withoot a gloamin'.

TO MR AND MRS D—— C—— ON THE EVE OF
THEIR SILVER WEDDING

It's five an' twenty years, Meg,
Sin' we took up oor load,
An' mony ups an' doons, Meg,
We've met wi' on the road.

The sky has aft been black, Meg,
Yet aye a silver line
Has tinged the margin o' the clouds,
Since first I ca'd ye mine.

I ne'er hae gane astray, Meg,
At least, no' very far,
An' ye're the lass that never said—
“Noo, Davie, if ye daur.”

While fechtin' wi' the warld, Meg,
Your cheery word an' smile,
Has helped to banish a' my care
An' ev'ry fear beguile.

'Tho' silver be your hair, Meg,
An' toothless be your mou',
Ye're jist the same to me, as when
At first I did ye lo'e.

An' may Auld Faither Time, Meg,
Engrave your youthfu' face
Upon my heart, that I may ne'er
Be shadowed by disgrace.

An' here we pledge anew, Meg,
The vows when we were wed,
An' doon the hill thegither gang,
Each by the ither led.

SONNET

Dedicated to a ministerial friend on the occasion of his semi-jubilee

THOU art our guide, yea more, the dearest friend
In joy or sorrow to the rich or poor,
Where'er thy mind doth lead the way is sure,
Dispelling doubts when evil might transcend;
Yet thine aspiring soul would still ascend
To be renewed in love, thy heart aglow
With sacred fire, that from thy lips may flow
The truth of God that all should comprehend.
Sublime are words, but deeds alone can test;
This is thy standard now, chief of our band,
Who in thy life—that part of Heaven's great plan—
Makes manifest this ideal is the best;
The highest, noblest, till beside the strand
Thine eyes are opened to behold the Man.

TO MISS F— ON HER MARRIAGE

HEREWITH is a gift, altho' puir it may be,
Perchance it will pass for a token
O' love an' esteem frae my guidwife an' me,
That your happiness ne'er may be broken.

Fu' aft hae I wondered whate'er could be wrang,
Nae man seemed to come to ye wooin',
Tho' married mysel', I declare by my sang,
I scarce could resist your sweet cooin'.

Had I been a wanter, a blythe, burly chield,
An' met thee a charming young maiden,
What joy to hae toiled in the workshop or field,
Till wi' treasure I cam' to thee laden.

Since this canna be, I'm delighted to ken
A hame o' your ain ye are gettin',
Nae doot but the man will be king among men,
An' yoursel' like a sun never settin'.

The wee ragged bairnies barefitted an' cauld,
Ye hae lo'ed a' the years o' your teachin',
A blessin' ye'll be an' will prove when ye're auld,
That *love* is the best kind o' preachin'.

TO BAILIE JOHN STEVENSON

Verses suggested on visiting Kilmarnock.

“ HAS auld Kilmarnock seen the De’il ? ”
So Robin asked, leal-hearted chiel,
Nane kent auld Killie half sae weel
 As honest Rob,
While nane could up Parnassus spiel
 On better cob.

I lang had thocht I’d like to ken
Gin I could spot auld Nicky Ben,
Socht up an’ doon frae en’ to en’
 The auld toon thro’,
The likest I could find ’mong men,
 Was Navvy, fou.

I met an auld Kilmarnock chiel,
A famous man wi’ rod an’ reel—
Wi’ heart that can for ithers feel
 Wha suffer wrang,
An’ ready aye to share a meal
 The puir amang.

He schul’d me weel in ilka street,
At length I thocht ’twad be discreet
To step inside, oor throats to weet
 Wi’ Begbie’s best;
An’ aiblins sit at Robin’s feet
 A willin’ guest.

TO BAILIE JOHN STEVENSON

'Twas there he took his wee bit tot,
The happiest man in a' the lot,
Tho' some daured say he turned a sot,
 Whilk ne'er was true;
He lives, while they are a' forgot,
 Immortal noo.

'Twas there my granny's uncle, Tam,
Had ance wi' Rob a freen'ly dram,
Whan to this ancient toon he cam'
 To buy a coo;
They sat an' made the glasses slam
 The hale nicht thro'.

I keek'd intil the quaint auld kirk,
Whaur "Great McKinlay" did his work,
Withoot the aid o' targe an' dirk
 But doctrine soond;
Till heresy had e'en to shirk
 The corner roond.

At yon fine statue on the hill,
I doffed my hat an' gazed my fill,
Then step'd inside as, calm an' still,
 I drap't a tear;
While a' my manhood seem'd to thrill
 Wi' reverent fear.

I cherish a' the bard has said,
The capstane o' it sure was laid,
When he confess'd a comely maid
 Was aye his bane;
A' joys o' earth are sure to fade
 But this alane.

TO BAILIE JOHN STEVENSON

Then may his mantle fa' on me,
E'en his defects—for some, I see,
May weel be mine, I canna dree
 The cantin' cad;
I like a man a man to be,
 Tho' aiblins bad.

The rapture o' a lonely 'oor
Wi' bonnie lass in am'rous bow'r,
I e'en hae felt—I could devour
 Her very sel',
Gie reason for't—'tis past the pow'r
 O' man to tell.

But see yon surtout-coated loon,
Wha prays an' preaches thro' the toon,
Wi' antics like a vain buffoon,
 I wad him ban;
We need na such, but morn an' noon
 An honest man.

TO THE ROSE

O SWEETEST flower by Nature given ;
When gentle breezes fan thy brow
Thy fragrance is the breath of Heaven,
That doth each pulsing sense endow.

Behold thee budding forth to life,
Thy beauty hid from captor's eye,
Who wanton waits with open knife—
The moment his, you droop to die.

Thy tender petals, newly born,
Unfolding greet the opening day,
And charm the dewdrop from the thorn
Near by thy side to guard the way.

Enchanting rose on parent stem,
That blooms like virgin cheek aglow
With varied shades, thou perfect gem ;
No painter's hand such tints could show.

Not all thy loveliness is seen,
Thy perfume fills the air around,
The Master Chemist here hath been,
No other hath this secret found.

Adieu, sweet flower of love, adieu !
Thou emblem of the Better Land,
I wait thy counterpart anew,
For thou art crumbling in my hand.

TO HIS GRACIOUS MAJESTY, KING GEORGE V.

THRICE blest the country where a monarch's reign
Can emulate the people's love and bliss—
The mystic power that none should ever miss,
To King or peasant gives celestial gain.
We know, to-day, thou art not crowned in vain;
O King! with earnest heart the sceptre kiss,
And nations of the earth will gaze at this—
A people's will! whose love thou wilt maintain.
When thy great name becomes a resting place,
And men shall war no more—O glad release!
For they behold in thee thy father's face
Reflected down the years in love and peace.
Go forward, upward, win thy just renown,
And time will bless thee with a lasting crown.

OUR HEARTS BEAT TRUE

Written on receipt of a sprig of shamrock sent by an Irish lady.

THE dear ould Em'rald Isle,
Where the little shamrocks smile
And seem to say Saint Patrick's day
Has come, and welcome too;
For liberty in Ireland now
My heart beats true!

Saint Patrick's day, ochone!
I used to think was gone,
But the heart is true that calls to you
Across the waters blue;
Then hurrah for dear ould Ireland, for
Our hearts beat true.

Then a lump rose in my throat
As, with shamrock in my coat,
I thought, sure now, that this was how
A girl with eyes of blue
Made Saint Patrick and ould Ireland in
My heart beat true.

I swaggered down the street
Feeling springs were in my feet,
That beat applause, for Ireland's cause
Had come with power anew,
To wear the dear ould shamrock, when
Our hearts beat true.

OUR HEARTS BEAT TRUE

The Countess Limerick
Attends to soldiers sick,
And sends a sprig so neat and trig
To all who give in lieu
A helping hand to Ireland, for
Her heart beats true.

Let each one do his part
With real ould Irish heart,
Then we shall sing till echoes ring,
And all the world shall view,
Salvation to ould Ireland, for
Their hearts beat true!

VI
IN MEMORIAM



MOURNERS

QUIETLY the tears may flow,
Down the rugged face they go,
When dejected in our woe,
 Soothing the mourners.

Swiftly they are brushed away,
We would wish them not to stay
On our cheek from day to day
 Sadd'ning the mourners.

Balm of peace from Heaven sent,
To our human nature lent,
So with reverence heads are bent
 When we are mourners.

As the dewdrop on the thorn,
Or on blade of grass at morn,
All our pleasures here are born
 But to pass, mourners.

But behold! tho' crushed with grief—
We are part of one—the Chief;
He will give us sure relief,
 Go to Him, mourners.

While we gaze with upturned eye,
Look within, the answer's nigh,
Lo! the soul can never die,
 Why then be mourners?

A TRIBUTE TO MY MOTHER, JANET WRIGHT

*The wide horizon with the eyes we scan,
Yet far, and farther still, the mind can see
Beyond the seen; the mystic sight of man
Beholds the spirit life that is to be!*

O WEARY is my heart, mither!
The nicht is dour an' cauld.
Ken ye the mood, as ance ye did,
Ere time had made ye auld?

There's no' a star in a' the lift
To gie connectin' link;
A blash o' snaw is on the grun'
As I sit here an' think.

For ah! in winter Nature fades,
An' seeks the needed rest;
But vernal spring comes back again
To gie life o' its best.

Thy mind, ance clear as noon, mither;
Thy forehead towerin' high;
Alas! a cloud in later days
Had darken'd a' thy sky.

Methinks I hear the eerie wail—
"O faither, come awa'!
We maun gang hame, we maun gang hame,
Afore the darkness fa'!"



MY MOTHER.

Whate'er I am I owe to thee
An' lo'e thee as mysel.



A TRIBUTE TO MY MOTHER

Again, I staun' beside thy bed,
Thy sand-glass rinnin' low,
Grain efter grain, to fourscore years,
They noo maun cease to flow.

Thy chequer'd life, O wae is me!
Is ebbin' fast awa';
But ance within the inner courts
Thou'lt be as driven snaw.

For lo, the change! Serene thy broo,
Noo stilled the constant wail;
O come, ye seraph angels, come,
An' guide her thro' the vale!

Far i' the dowie eve o' life,
God set thy spirit free;
We laid in yonder auld kirkyaird
A' that was left o' thee.

I canna say I'm vexed, mither,
For O! I seem to see
Thy form erect, an' hear thee speak,
As ye were wont to me.

For a' thy past remains wi' me;
In gratitude I tell—
Whate'er I am I owe to thee,
An' lo'e thee as mysel'.

Hast thou not said that God's decree
Agreed wi' Nature's laws,
That sceptic man betimes micht learn
The great an' true "First Cause?"

A TRIBUTE TO MY MOTHER

Nae "coat-sleeve creed" was thine, I ween,
Nae sentimental cant;
The licht o' love was gi'en to thee,
To help the pair that want.

An' jist as we wad live oor life,
E'en sae, we brawly ken
That on the ither side oor hame
Will be a "but" or "ben."

I saw thee lean upon thy staff,
Wi' falt'rin' step an' slow;
I see thee staun' beside the throne,
Thy features all aglow!

The "Great Jehovah" aye to thee
A "Covenant o' Grace!"
An' noo a gleam o' glory shines,
Reflected on thy face.

Gin thou hast pow'r, O help me noo
The goal o' peace to win!
To gaze about, O may I cease,
An' rather keek within!

*My dearest friend! my Mother! none more true!
I loved her first, and would that love renew
In Heaven; where, acme of the future state,
Is Bliss. O may I meet her at the gate
Of Paradise! and through Eternity behold her face
Illumined with a smile of love, and glow of perfect grace.*

IN MEMORIAM: QUEEN VICTORIA

“THE Queen is dead!” a nation’s tears
Flow silently as ocean’s tide;
For she has been our noble guide
In sun and shade, adown the years;
To her we turned to calm our fears,
Our Mother Queen, Victoria.

And all throughout the empire wide
Revere thy reign, so pure and good,
And mourn in chastened gratitude,
In deep devotion, righteous pride,
No name in all the world beside
Compares with thine, Victoria.

Thy never-failing tact has been
Extolled by men in every clime,
O noblest woman of thy time;
Thou precious gem; Britannia’s Queen;
We pause in awe; what can it mean?
But we submit—Victoria.

From thee all factions far were hurled,
And in the nation’s heart was sealed
Thy fame, not gained on vaunted field;
Yet where thy flag has been unfurled,
It floats a symbol to the world
Of thy sweet grace, Victoria.

IN MEMORIAM: QUEEN VICTORIA

The worth and beauty of a throne
Are not the robes that please the eye,
The daïs, nor the courtiers nigh,
Nor e'en the Coronation Stone,—
These mark the splendour of a throne,
But thine was more, Victoria.

Thy treasure was the lowly heart
Of peasant, lord, or gentle dame,
And why?—thine own was all aflame
With love, which was the counterpart
And secret of thy queenly art—
Our hearts thy throne, Victoria.

IN MEMORY OF EDWARD THE PEACEMAKER

O LIST, to-day the mighty cannons boom,
And solemn bells—sad requiem for the dead;
In silent grief, we note the stately tread
In yonder pile, great Windsor's ancient room.
Diffuse with tears the flowers around the tomb,
For there repose the ashes of a King;
And this our tribute, all that we can bring,
A nation's tears can scarce assuage the gloom.
Yet while we mourn, and all the world beside,
We bless his wisdom and his loving heart,
These, earnest of his power and kingly art,
A king, a man, a father, brother, guide.
He lived for peace, like Him of Galilee,
And earned his crown to immortality.

THE LAST WORDS

“EASE me a little to the right,
O raise my head a wee,
There now; in God’s own love and light
My soul longs to be free.”

Our dear boy smiled, held out his hand,
And said, “I see the way,
'Tis hard for you to understand,
I go, and yet, I stay.

“Weep not for me, I have no fear,
All is serene and bright,
The memory of the past will cheer
And give you Heavenly sight.”

Then all was still, but far away
Beyond the vault of blue,
He seemed to see a great array
Of something that was new.

Alone we gazed in silence then,
And thought of life to be,
And all that is beyond our ken
Till we have eyes to see.

He is not dead, nor yet asleep,
But stands at God’s right hand,
And waits with loving care to keep
Our place in yonderland.

ENA

LINNETS sang, with glad acclaim,
When reviving Nature came;
April show'rs, sunblinks between,
Ushered to our home the Queen—
Ena.

Pouting mouth and ruby lips,
Glowing like the buttercups
Nestling 'mong the meadow hay,
Hiding modestly away;
Ena.

Open brow of purest snow,
Dimples on thy cheeks aglow;
Bright thy smile—by angels given—
Gleaming as a star in Heaven,
Ena.

But thine eyes (O dear, those eyes!)
Flashing with a glad surprise;
Wistful, soft, as evening sheen
When the autumn tints are seen,
Ena.

Lady fingers, lily hand,
Fairest of our little band,
Angel voice, so soft and clear,
Far too sweet to linger here;
Ena.

Mark thee, passing down the stair,
Tuck thy dress like lady fair;
See thee take thy father's hand—
Gladdest child in all the land;
Ena.

ENA

Thou art gone—we know not why,
Only, that we live to die;
Soon the veil shall rend in twain,
Then shall we behold again—
Ena.

Glorious prospect! truth to me,
Spirit life that is to be,
When I cross the sullen tide,
And with rapture walk beside—
Ena.

Far beyond the envious blue
(O for eyes to pierce it through!)
See thee, Ena, know the plan,
And the great Disposer scan,
Ena.

Do we murmur, do we fret?
Yes, we do, but ne'er forget
God in kindness lent thee here
For a time, our home to cheer,
Ena.

May we live in calm repose,
Hoping, trusting God, Who knows
Why our path has turned this way
To the bright eternal day,
Ena.

Dearest one, a cherub now,
Laurel wreath around thy brow,
Dark with us, but light with thee;
God is Light in part we see;
Ena.

TO MY FRIEND, CHARLES SMITH

FRIEND of my manhood, now I think of thee
As having passed from time into Eternity.
To follow thee, I by thy life would learn,
What power was thine, thy heritage to earn!
For here thy mind had never ceased to know
That perfect wisdom ne'er was reached below.
The poor in mind from thine abundance took,
That ever bubbled o'er like running brook
With flooded banks, and yet such knowledge gained
By ceaseless toil alone had been attained.
Thy wisdom, prudence, charity and love,
All these were thine, as all thy actions prove.
Thy virtues shone, my friend, thy faults were few;
If such were thine, I'm glad that none I knew.
When first we met, as I remember now,
The pink of manhood sat upon thy brow;
'Twas yesterday, and now thou art away!
We live to die, the creatures of a day;
Yet die to live, friend Smith, I'll come to thee,
In God's good time, in joyful ecstasy.
For thou art now amidst the shining throng—
Redeemed, thy manly voice joins in the song
Of praise, where spirits pure, serene and bright,
Bask in the rays of God's effulgent light.
If from that home thy spirit hath the power,
Give timely help, I pray, from hour to hour;
Shed forth thy light, illumine all the road,
From sin to truth, from darkness up to God,
Where we shall meet, both sanctified and free,
Within the mansions of Eternity.

PEGGY

WHEN mountain torrents leap and roar,
And angry waves beat on the shore,
When all is dark, and skies are grey,
A glint of sun at break of day
Will rouse us from our torpid sleep,
And make us feel that God doth keep
The promise He hath made of old—
That spring succeeds the winter's cold.

Joy to our hearts; the spring had come;
And seemed to penetrate our home,
In through the casement, chink of door,
Diffusing light through ev'ry pore;
It filled the house to overflow,
And warmed my bosom with its glow;
Took angel form at Heaven's decree,
And brought a baby girl to me!

And ev'ry day, and month, and year,
This baby girl grew doubly dear,
Her curly hair, of golden hue,
Fanned by the zephyr winds that blew
Around her neck and shoulders white
Reflecting to our hearts the light
Of love, that shone in Peggy's eyes,
Cloudless and blue as summer skies.

PEGGY

And then I felt I could discern
The light of Truth, and humbly learn
How great and good our God must be,
To bless a home with such as she.
And thus the sun shone day by day
To light our path, direct the way
That leads us to a higher sphere;
We felt it so with Peggy near.

Just then she changed, and death came nigh;
We hoped, we prayed she might not die;
But all grew dark, those eyes of blue
Were closed in death,—but ah! anew
They shine with all their lustre bright;
Behold! again they give us light!
And in our home illumined now
Reflected is her angel brow.

Where'er I am her face I see
Beaming with loving ecstasy;
The patter of her little feet,
Her rippling voice like music sweet,
All through the corridors above
Reverberate the chords of love!
And fill my longing soul the while
To share with her a Saviour's smile.

But when I reach the realms of bliss
Impress upon her lips a kiss,
And hear her tell, how time hath been
A streak of black across a screen
Of light, that hid her from my view.
How much on earth I thought I knew
Shall fade, as fades the lamps of night
When day's full orb bursts on the sight.

PEGGY

From Peggy I have learned the way,
To Whom, and when, and how to pray;
Her holy influence still is mine,
But purer now, she is divine.
The flick'ring light, when from me torn,
Will shine through an eternal morn,
And waft my soul to Peggy's home;
And lo! she beckons me to come.

ETERNAL JOY

DIRECT from Heaven's eternal fount
The stream of joy still flows,
As days and years roll on apace
It ever broader grows.

THE LAST REQUEST

In Memoriam. Prince Christian Victor of Schleswig-Holstein

(The Prince, before leaving for Africa, left instructions that if he should die at the Front, he wished to be buried there.)

O MOTHER, my sun is descending, and night
O'ershadows thy home with its darkness and gloom;
But my day star shall rise like a beacon of light
To shed its pure rays through the shade of my tomb.

Thy gentle love tokens in childhood and youth
Come crowding upon me with friends who are dear;
Yet, blessèd be God, I rejoice in the truth
That knows no misgivings and dries every tear.

O never again shall my footsteps resound
Thro' the halls of my ancestors faded and grey,
Still beauty and grace will for ever abound
Where love is the watch-word for all to obey.

O let my last shroud be the flag of the brave,
And bury me deep in the sands of the plain,
Where thousands of comrades are laid in the grave,
Whose names are inscribed on the roll of the slain.

But, mother, O look to my comrades in war
Who are maimed and unfit for the battle of life,
And the children of those who on kopje and scaur
Like heroes have died in the midst of the strife.

THE LAST REQUEST

O'er kopje and donga, o'er valley and river,
Our heroes fought hard for the old flag to wave,
Now justice and right in the Queen's name for ever
Shall reign o'er the Briton, the Boer, and the Slave.

O just for a moment to lean on thy breast!
And press on thy cheek a last lingering kiss,
But the angels of glory appear on the crest
To summon me home to the regions of bliss.

Hark! hark! o'er the plain the reveille is sounding
That gives to the dying the longed-for release;
And lo! from the mountains of Heaven come bounding,
White chargers with riders whose tidings are peace.

EDMUND J. BAILLIE

LIST! give thine ear! behold his face!

The spirit world is richer now—
The radiant glory I can trace,
With crown of laurel on his brow.

But lo! he speaks, to you, to me,
“The time is short;” go work to-day,
“To-morrow ne’er can measured be,
Time ever comes,” but not to stay.

The music of his voice I hear,
And note the vigour of the man,
But were these eyes of mine more clear
I could his hallowed glory scan.

Deep from the well of truth he drank,
His inner promptings thus inclined—
Full to its utmost depths they sank,
For well he knew ’twas there defined.

The Master’s will he sought to know,
To trace the footprints where He trod,
Then follow wheresoe’er below,
Would lead his mind and soul to God.

With “Blade of Grass” or “Lily White,”
He typified the better part,
Of all who walk by faith, not sight,
Hast thou the germ, O doubting heart?

Our life is a perpetual rush,
And bless'd is he amidst the din,
Who can withdraw and court the hush
That sweetens all his life within.

The philosophic thinker knows
The greatest truths are never seen
Until God's spirit inward flows
And takes the place where sin hath been.

While autumn glory tinged the sky
"The thrill of life" had ceased to be,
But ah! I feel his presence nigh
To speak of perfect truth to me.

On whom will his bright mantle fall?
That robe of peace—so spotless white;
Eternal One, O bless the call,
And guide the erring soul aright.

Farewell! thy pent up soul is free,
We'll meet in spirit life, alone,
And commune on the great TO BE
Amid the splendours of the Throne!

JEANIE MILLER MARSHALL

I'm dowie, blae, an' cauld, Jeanie,
Sin' ye were ta'en awa',
An' tho' I courie doon, Jeanie,
Nae heat I get ava.

I dinna think it's wrang, Jeanie,
Saut tears should dim my ee;
I wan'er oot an' in, Jeanie,
A-seekin' aye for thee.

An' yet fu' weel I ken, Jeanie,
The warl' is cauld an' bleak;
An' yonder in the mools, Jeanie,
I needna for thee seek.

Ay, ay, we grudge thee sair, Jeanie,
An' think the hoose is toom;
We'll dootless ken in time, Jeanie,
What made oor een sae dim.

I'm wae we pairted sune, Jeanie,
Thy face I canna see;
Yet hope springs high within, Jeanie,
An' croons thy love to me.

An' oh! I'm gratefu' noo, Jeanie,
God gied us thee awhile;
Thy leal true life o' love, Jeanie,
Thy pure an' heavenly smile.

JEANIE MILLER MARSHALL

Thy mirth in days lang syne, Jeanie,
Was like the burnie's croon;
An' noo thy ripplin' voice, Jeanie,
We list, an' hear abune.

Thy bonnie broo, like snaw, Jeanie,
That's drifted in a slap,
Whaur snawdraps waitin' spring, Jeanie,
Lie sleepin' 'neath its hap.

Frae oot yon cosy bield, Jeanie,
Ayont the spotless blue,
Thy shaft o' love I feel, Jeanie,
Fa' warm upon my broo.

Tho' darkness hides the lift, Jeanie,
An' Nature seems asleep;
Yet safe 'mid ilka change, Jeanie,
Oor treasures God will keep.

In mansions o' the blest, Jeanie,
Thy angel form will shine;
An' God has made me feel, Jeanie,
Tho' there, thou still art mine.

Whaur flo'ers are aye in bloom, Jeanie,
Nae hearts asunder torn,
The glow o' love will shine, Jeanie,
An endless summer morn.

In blessed peace serene, Jeanie,
Thou yet wilt welcome me;
An' hark! I hear the ca', Jeanie,
I come! I come to thee.

TO MY FRIEND, DANIEL MACMILLAN

How I miss thee, dear MacMillan,
When the stormy tempests blow,
And my evening pipe I'm fillin'
As we used to long ago,
In the shadow of the evening
With the hearthstone all aglow.

Ah! my friend, the past has treasure
Like to ashes in the grate,
For behold! no man can measure
All their power to recreate—
So the embers of our friendship
Still remain inviolate.

Dost thou see the wild waves rolling
Where thy body lies at rest?
Dost thou hear the church bells tolling
In thy haven of the blest?
Canst thou come and sit beside me
As of old at my behest?

For to-night the wind is moaning
And the bare tree branches shake,
'Tis the voice of Nature groaning
Out a requiem for thy sake;
While the patter of the rain-drops
Beats in tune to my heart's ache.

TO MY FRIEND, DANIEL MACMILLAN

Thus I weary, when I ponder,
That my earth thoughts travel slow
To the near or distant yonder
Where thou art; dost thou bestow
All thy power?—for I am quickened
With the feeling I should know.

Since to me thou still art living,
With the muse and thee I dream,
And thy counsel thou art giving
As of yore to choose my theme;
So I rest my soul from doubting,
“For things are not what they seem.”

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

FREE from the world of strife,
Dead in the prime of life,
Mourn, with devoted wife,
 For Louis Stevenson.

Propped in his bed to write
Words full of life and bright,
His was a glorious fight,
 Brave Louis Stevenson.

Hark! for the hour is nigh,
Come, 'tis the call to die.
"Ready," the calm reply
 Of Louis Stevenson.

Stilled is the mighty pen,
Hushed is the voice 'mong men:
How will our children fen,
 No Louis Stevenson.

Mark how his life was grand,
First in a noble band;
But in a foreign land
 Lies Louis Stevenson.

Done with his arduous toil,
Buried in yon lone isle,
Far from his native soil,
 Sleeps Louis Stevenson.

TO MY FRIEND, JOHN JAMIESON

I AM weary, weary, weary,
And my soul longs to be free,
But the ferry boat is coming
Far across the glassy sea.

I can hear the crickle, crickle,
Of the row-lock and the oar,
While the wavelets ripple, ripple,
As they break upon the shore.

Hark! I hear the angels singing
As they step upon the quay,
And the lapping of the waters
Brings the summons now to me.

But I'm ready, ready, ready,
And the call is no surprise,
With the ebbing tide I'll journey
To my home beyond the skies.

For the past has all been shadow,
Now the mist and clouds are gone,
And I'm coming, Lord, in gladness,
For I trust in Thee alone.

Yes, I'm coming, Lord, I'm weary,
And I long to be at rest,
Thou art Captain of the ferry,
And all things are for the best.

MAGGIE

O SAD an' weary is the day,
Oor hame is toom an' bare,
The glint o' love an' licht is gane,
Oor hearts are sad an' sair.

Ay, sad an' sair an' lanesome noo
Sin' Maggie isna here,
And yet fu' weel we ken at times
Her spirit hovers near.

We kenna why this trial cam',
Oor grief is hard to bear;
But oh! where'er oor treasure is
Oor hearts would fain be there.

We see the flo'ers that bloom an' fade,
We hear the mavis sing,
They a' remind us o' thysel',
And comfort to us bring.

Thy voice that pierced the rafters thro',
Thy sweet and winsome ways,
Will knit thee closer to oor hearts,
And cheer the lanesome days.

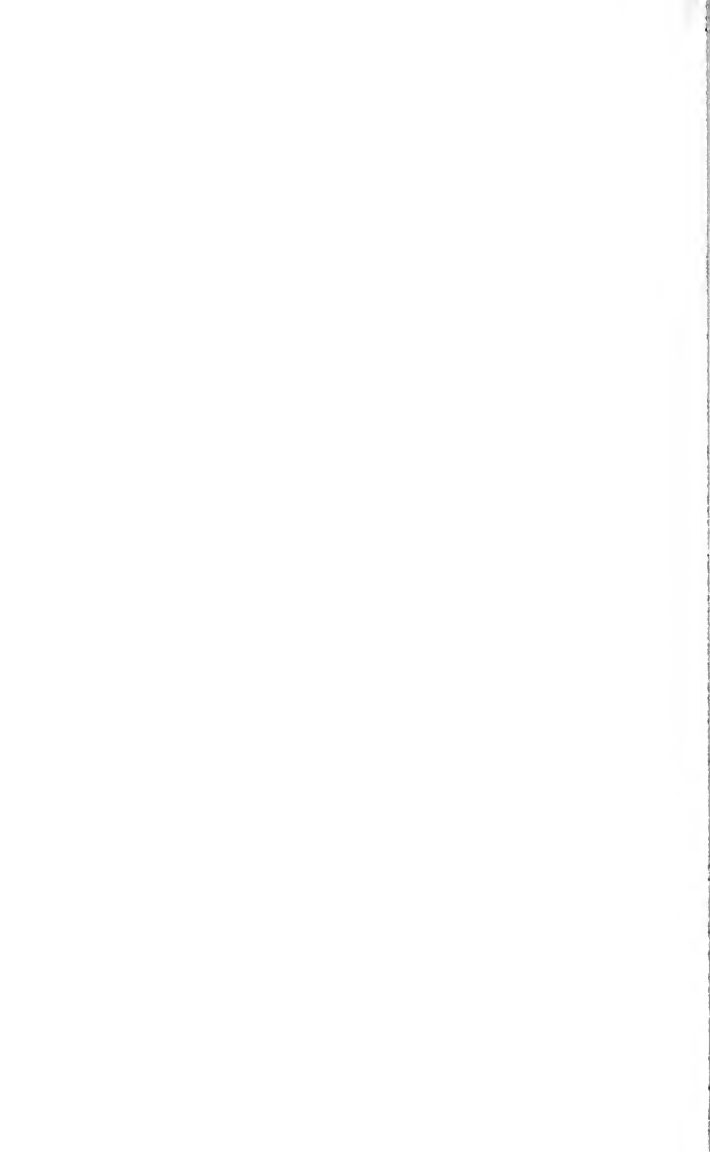
Thy frien's and comrades mourn and fret,
Their hearts wi' sadness torn,
That in the wauken 'oors o' life
Thy sun should set at morn.

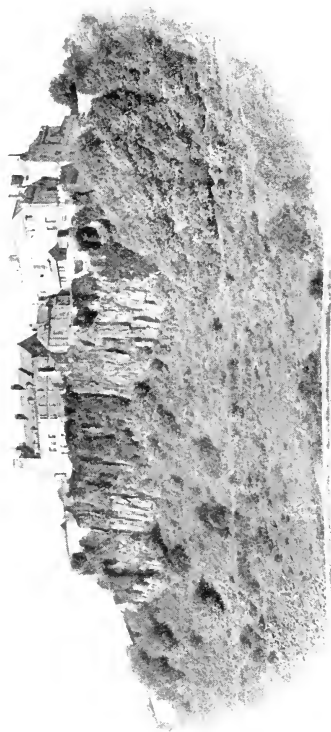
MAGGIE

Some say we laid thee in the mools,
But, Maggie, noo ye ken
'Tis but a gap frae here to there,
A step frae noo till then.

The sting o' death is nipt awa',
An' victory there is nane,
For God has promised us to keep
Until we meet again.

VII
PATRIOTISM AND WAR





STIRLING ROCK.

Behold the rock whose turrets mock
The ravages of time.

THE STIRLING ROCK

IN Stirling high when slogan cry
Made all the valley ring,
And kilted men from hill and glen
Their broad claymores did bring,
For Scotland's weal with targe and steel
To break the tyrant's chain,
The grand old rock from England's yoke
Must liberty attain.

CHORUS :

Then here's to the rock, to the grey old rock,
The mighty bulwark of the north,
The sentinel to guard the Forth,
The valour of old in our hearts we lock,
And sing to the praise of the grey old rock.

From off the rock like earthquake's shock
Thy battle fierce was seen,
When Wallace wight with men of might
Where flows the Forth between,
Rushed with a yell and surging swell,
The quivering bridge gave way,
The crashing sound with glory crowned
The fortunes of the day.

CHORUS :

Then here's to the rock, to the grey old rock,
The mighty bulwark of the north,
The sentinel to guard the Forth,
The valour of old in our hearts we lock,
And sing to the praise of the grey old rock.

THE STIRLING ROCK

Behold the rock whose turrets mock
The ravages of time,
Where peace serene endears the scene
And decks the crest sublime,
And we shall raise unstinted praise
To all the Scottish clan,
Whose shouts unite to cheer the right
And brotherhood of man.

CHORUS :

Then here's to the rock, to the grey old rock,
The mighty bulwark of the north,
The sentinel to guard the Forth,
The valour of old in our hearts we lock,
And sing to the praise of the grey old rock.

AFTER THE BATTLE

An incident of Waterloo, as related by my Mother, who had the story from John Wands.

These verses seem to me to be incomplete without putting on record the story of John Wands. When a young man he was a weaver, and when his web met with a misfortune (a cat having jumped through the warp), he was afraid to face his father, and took the mail coach to Glasgow, enlisting in the 79th Highlanders just previous to the outbreak of the Peninsular War. He was through the whole campaign, and never was back to the village until peace was declared some 18 years after, and Bonaparte had been sent to Elba. When Bonaparte returned to Paris, old John was on furlough, and received a sudden call to rejoin his regiment, being present at Waterloo, as recorded in the verses. Twenty years after the battle, when John, dressed immaculately with white vest, frock coat, and top hat, was proceeding to the Castle of Stirling to receive his pension, he met two ladies and a gentleman. The gentleman had his right sleeve pinned up in front of his breast. Just as they met, John recognized, in a moment, his old Captain, who had lost his arm as described in the poem. He came to the "Attention," and saluted. The gentleman also stood and returned the salute, exclaiming: "Where have we met?" In a moment John explained, and the Captain called the ladies, introduced John, looked his watch and said: "Now, meet me in the Star Inn at 3 o'clock." They met, and they sat all that afternoon, all through the night and the next day, eating and drinking and sleeping alternately. When, next evening, a deputation was sent from the village (this deputation including my father, who was then a young man) to try to find out what had become of old John, the searchers eventually found him in the Star Inn. Neither of them could be said to have more drink than he was able to carry, but there they were, and there they received the deputation with great hilarity, and John with his friends reached the village in the "sma' 'oors o' the mornin'!"

AFTER the battle is over
And the enemy is fled,
When time is given to breathe,
And think of the dying and dead.

AFTER THE BATTLE

It is then one sees with horror
The deadly work that is done,
While the groans of the brave men dying
Seem to mock the victory won.

Just when the battle was over,
At four in the afternoon,
Out of the smoke and the tumult
On that fateful day of June,

Napoleon saw the day was lost,
And fled from the field of strife
With the remnant of his famous Guard,
Now beaten and crushed for life.

The "assemble" had been sounded,
We hurried to take our place,
The words, "eyes right," as we mustered,
Brought a look of dread to each face.

"Number from the right," said our captain,
But we were only eleven,—
"My God! am I seeing right, boys,
Is this my Company Seven?"

Such were the words of our hero
Who had led us throughout the day,
When a stray shot from the enemy
His sword arm carried away.

Each man stared blank at his fellow,
And panted as if for breath,
Bespattered with mud, and with blood too,
Like slime from the valley of death.

AFTER THE BATTLE

"I want you to go on fatigue, men,"
I must say it before I die—
"March down to the valley yonder
Where your brave old comrades lie.

"And seek for the wounded first, boys,
Take care that you bring all in,
To-day they have shed their blood, boys,
Our country's cause to win."

And away we marched, but in sorrow,
'Twas worse than ent'ring the fight,
No shots were heard, 'twas the groans now
Of the dying, left and right.

Not a word was said till we halted
Where the fight had been fierce and long,
There the dead and wounded mingled
The enemy among.

'Twas a regiment of cuirassiers
Who had charged us down the hill,
But we formed square in an instant,
And we met them with a will.

A destructive fire was opened
From two sides of the square,
While the noise of men and horses
And musketry rent the air.

The carnage was something fearful,
The curses loud and deep,
The armoured men and horses fell
An indiscriminate heap.

AFTER THE BATTLE

I searched for my friend Jim Beatson,
My right hand man in line,
And lo! in the ditch I found him,
My comrade of lang syne.

We had been to school together,
And fought through the long campaign
Side by side, 'mid the battle's strife,
But now, alas! he's slain.

My hot brain reeled, my mind seemed gone,
The fighting was all a blank,
My friends and comrades round me dead
In that valley, cold and dank.

But we turned to our ghastly work,
We gathered the wounded in,
And trenches dug, long, deep and wide,
And the dead we tumbled in.

'Tis after the battle is over,
After the victory's won,
That one's manhood fails within him,
When he sees what war has done.

THE CHARGE OF THE GORDONS AT ELANDSLAAGTE

THE pibroch rang loud through the valleys of Nátal,
The war drum was heard where it ne'er was before,
The Gordons, responding, dashed into the battle,
And breasted the heights like their fathers of yore.

And then as they thought of that day under Colley,
And darksome Majuba, the spot where he fell,
They fixed their sharp bayonets, discharged their last
volley,
And shouted, "The crest, though the fire be as Hell."

The enemy crowded on kopjes defended,
That looked like the steepes of their Scottish Glencoe,
As over the boulders with bayonets extended
The Highlanders rushed on the merciless foe.

The foemen were staggered at sight of the tartan,
Declared they were devils in likeness of men;
O, little they knew that the blood of the Spartan
Still coursed through their veins like the floods down
the glen.

And now in the midst of the thunder of battle,
The boom of the cannon, explosion of shell,
The kopjes were carried, the burghers like cattle
Rushed madly away, or expired where they fell.

"Thus serve we our foes," cried the Gordons exultant,
"No more will they doubt we are able to fight,
Every inch of the ground they have yielded reluctant,
But now we are victors, while they are in flight."

THE CHARGE OF THE GORDONS AT ELANDSLAAGTE

Then darkness descended o'er valley and mountain,
And spread like a pall o'er the field of the dead,
And hearts of our heroes grew sad when recounting
The price they had paid in the blood that was shed.

And all through the land where our flag is unfurled,
The homes of the wealthy, the cots of the poor,
Will mourn for the dead, but proclaim to the world,
How just was our cause, when we conquered the Boer.

GENERAL HECTOR MACDONALD

THE hero of a hundred fights,
Clan Coila's bravest son,
Has sheathed his sword in silence now
His last great victory won.
And wae are all Clan Coila's men
His coronach to sing;
Still through his own dear native glen
The wail of grief shall ring.

"GALLANT TOMMY ATKINS"

Reply to Rudyard Kipling's "Absent-Minded Beggar."

HE's a hero, not a "beggar," gallant Tommy Atkins
now,
With another wreath of laurels twined around his manly
brow;
And he loves his country dearly, with his home and
family ties,
Satisfied they will be cared for, though in battle fierce
he dies.

He "an Absent-Minded Beggar" beating on a
tambourine,
Is a travesty of valour to a soldier of the Queen,
He's a man first, then a fighter, not a beggar with a cap
Who will stand beside the pavement every passer-by
to trap.

It is mean to dub him "beggar," for he's just like
you or me,
Or a trifle more heroic when the nation gives decree,
His obedience is proverbial, ever prompt to duty's call,
Then he stands at the attention and is steady as a wall.

'Tis a libel on his manhood, 'tis a burlesque on his
name,
And a blot on the escutcheon of the British soldier's
fame,
Though we know he's not an angel—he'd be useless
if he was—
Yet the angels guard our Tommy when he fights in
righteous cause.

Our indebtedness to Tommy we shall never cease to feel,
For his pluck and perseverance, for his sacrifice and zeal,
Since he comes from every corner of the empire for
the fight,
You can take it as a maxim that he battles for the right.

While to-day we know his mettle is the finest in the
world,
As he takes his stand in combat 'neath the Union Jack
unfurled,
Be he English, Scottish, Irish, or a brave Colonial
Scout,
For the dear old Queen and country, turns defeat into
a rout.

We extol our Tommy's virtues, and our history will
attest
That there's not another nation gives so freely of its best;
From the highest in the empire to the man upon the
street,
They have rallied under Roberts, and will die, but not
retreat.

Now we see a far-off city, where the vanquished
burghers stand,
You can bend your ear and listen to the music of the
band,
And the colonies can hear it, wafted o'er the silent sea,
While a glad response re-echoes through the empire
yet to be.

RESTLESS TOMMY ATKINS

A SOLDIER with a fractured thigh,
Got in Tugela's fight,
Was brought into the hospital
Protesting, "I'm all right."

He looked around with strange concern,
Spoke lightly of his sores,
"Some beans I've got inside my leg
Sown by those wily Boers."

His laughing face and cheery word
Gave heart to comrades all,
And made the nurses' work a joy,
Attending to each call.

Yet greater grew the need for beds,
As round the tents there lay
A crowd of men with ghastly wounds
When night gave place to day.

This lion-hearted man of steel,
Yet tender as a child,
When racked with pain would hide his face,
Then turning, sweetly smiled.

"O nurse, I'm giving trouble now,
Please help me from my bed,
There's Nugent, who belongs to ours,
Him with the bandaged head.

RESTLESS TOMMY ATKINS

“ He’s lain upon the veldt all night,
In bitter cold and wet,
And I am such a restless man
So given up to fret.”

Then presently a soldier’s cloak
Was spread upon the floor,
And there he lay in sweet content,
But keenly watched the door.

Just then the ambulance brought in
A brave young drummer boy,
In some far distant British home
A mother’s pride and joy.

“ Here, nurse, I’m such a restless man,
My limb is better now,
Do give my place to that poor boy,
The cold sweat’s on his brow.”

Three times they moved him when he said,
“ I’m such a restless man,”
And earnestly he tried to hide
What was his little plan.

“DID WE WIN?”

HAVE you seen a fierce tornado?

Have you heard the cannons roar?

Have you watched a molten furnace

Belching forth its sulph'rous ore?

These would pale before your vision

Had you looked on Spion Kop,

When our heroes, fighting, scrambled

In the darkness to the top.

Day disclosed the Boer position,

Long and dreadful was the fight,

Gallant men, determined, sullen,

Maddened at the awful sight!

Fast as hailstones in a tempest,

Flying shot and bursting shell

Made the summit of the mountain

Seem the very mouth of hell!

O'er the scene of blood and carnage

Kindly darkness cast a veil,

Now our men as if demented

Only heard their comrades wail!

On the morrow, brave men brought in

Wounded from the fatal field,

Self forgetful, but undaunted,

Bruised and broken, must they yield?

One poor fellow, mutilated—

Half his face was torn away—

Weakly signalled for a pencil—

He had something still to say.

“DID WE WIN?”

Feeble was the hand that held it,
Still the fire was in his eyes;
Message for some far off loved one,
He must leave before he dies.

Thus they thought, amidst the stillness—
Silent now the battle's din—
Tragic were the words he pencilled,
Shaky, faintly, “Did we win?”

Doctors gazed in blank amazement,
Brushed aside the rising tear,
Not a man was there could summon
Courage to allay his fear.

O'er a lonely grave in Nátal,
Far away from kith and kin,
Rudely sculptured on a crosslet,
Stands the question. “Did we win?”

WATERLOO

“SCOTLAND for ever!” the cry was loud and clear,
Quick the response with ringing British cheer,
On! on they dashed; the Greys and Enniskillens brave
To rout the stubborn foe or fill a soldier's grave.
“See how they charge!” the great Napoleon cried,
“Beloved France, the day is lost; I would have died
Rather than see thy name with such defeat allied.”

VIII
EPISTLES AND AUTOGRAPH VERSES



AILSA CRAIG

My worthy friend, your letter came,
And pleased I am you feel at hame
Beside the sea in Girvan toon,
Where Saxon saints were wont to croon
Their vesper hymns at eventide,
That rose and fell, till far and wide,
And all around Kirkdominæ
Responded to the melody.

To Ailsa Craig you've really been,
There Nature's handiwork is seen,
It towers aloft like mighty cone,
Yet sober in its pale grey stone;
The Architect Who made the plan
Was other than poor feeble man,
Who sinks in insignificance
Before such vast magnificence.

Is it the work of earthquake's shock?
This massive pile of granite rock
That rears its head like ancient seer,
In majesty without a peer;
Alone it stands as if asleep,
This monarch of the boundless deep;
The sea may swell and breakers roar,
They break in vain upon its shore.

AILSA CRAIG

Behold this craggy pyramid!
I'm told its summit oft is hid—
Affinity for clouded mind,
That seeks for truth it may not find.
'Tis there, though hidden from our view,
The mist dispels, we see anew,
When like this mountain in the sea,
Sublime in its simplicity.

SENT TO A FRIEND

A MAN can never know the truth
Until he's married,
And then he wonders why on earth
So long he tarried;
But "truth is hidden in a well,"
An old sage saying,
Man takes a wife, then he can tell
Truth is obeying.
Rejoice, my friend, your lot is cast
Truth is the giver,
The mystic tie of love is fast
For time, for ever.

WRITTEN IN AN AUTOGRAPH ALBUM

THE frost is keen, the snaw is fa'in',
Jist like a farmer busy sawin',
While here I sit fu' cosy smokin';
But wheesht! is that the postman knockin'?—
He handed in a card, an' on it,
“Lost, stolen, strayed, whaur is the sonnet
Ye promised to oor freend, Miss Abel?
Her album's there upon the table.”
Said my guidwife, “Losh! that's a caution,
See here, my man, ye're in the fashion,
Sit doon an' write this very minute,
The Post Card! weel! I'm gled I've seen it.”
What can I dae? I'm broken-hearted,
I'll tak' my pen an' forthwith start it,
For lang I've been intendin' writin'
Some thochts in verse worth your recitin',
But lack-a-day, the muse was saucy,
Or kept suggestin' something trashy,
An' after nearly three months waitin',
I'm wae to think she's gane a-skatin',
Or aff wi' some auld curlin' billy
A-galavantin'—Isn't silly?
If she were young, ane could excuse her,
For then 'twere easy to amuse her,
But bless my heart, she's auld an' fanky,
An' bald, an' crookit, unco cranky,
For aye the mair I try to woo 'er,
She casts her head, an' says, she's truer
Than whan at first before the altar
I put my head intil the halter,
That's cost me mony a guid 'oor's schemin',
But wait a minute, am I dreamin'?

"Halloo!" she cries, "the frost is bitin',
 Take up your pen an' start inditin',
 An' lang before ye've finished scribblin',
 The truth will come like water dribblin',
 An' prove the road o' love is crookit,
 While he that lo'es is often drookit."
 And sae the jade keeps caterwaulin',
 For ever showin' up my failin',
 Until my head wi' heat is roastin',
 An' even noo she cries, "Ye're boastin';"
 But rubbish may contain a jewel—
 The blackest coal's the best o' fuel—
 An' tho' I may appear to blether,
 A fickle maid is ill to tether,
 But after a' a noble woman
 Stands at the tap o' a' that's human,
 An' Nature never stoops to leein',
 Whilk privileged man can prove by seein',
 An' tho' the truth sometimes is hidden,
 Be true to self an' Nature's biddin',
 Gang straight ahead, avoid the turnin's,
 An' sae be saved life's great heartburnin's,
 Tak' tent, dae guid, an' keep entreatin',
 An' ne'er gang roun' the bus' a-beatin'.

WRITTEN IN A SCRAP ALBUM

THERE'S quite a lot of little things
Imprinted in this book,
And you must give your little mite,
Ere you can have a look.

And each must do the best he can,
No slipshod work is here,
You must not smile, I mean it all,
Both comic and sincere.

There's wit and there's philosophy,
And verses by the score,
And guiding lines from other minds
To open wisdom's door.

And hearts where love has never knocked
Are aching here as well;
'Tis sad to think that this is true,
The reason, who can tell?

The thought that dies upon the lips
Would often save a life,
If you be maid, then speak it out,
If man, then take a wife.

So now put in your mite and say,
Yes, I will do my part;
This is the key, you understand?
To leave no aching heart.

WRITTEN IN A SCRAP ALBUM

BYRON has said, and I have often seen it,
"A book's a book although there's nothing in it,"
But 'tis not true, at least in every case,
For here's a book on every page you trace
Fine works of art, and maxims true and terse,
In homely prose, or else in sweetest verse;
That he who runs may read, thus get to know
That wisdom is a plant whose growth is slow,
That when the germ finds lodgment in the mind,
Upward the growth, if tempered with the wind
That brings adversity as well as bliss,
Without these two we will be sure to miss
The sweets of life, meanwhile the germ will die,
And we are lost unless again we try.
Then, gentle reader, scan this book anew,
And you will find that all I say is true,
Search every page, you will be sure to see,
Not what you are, but what you ought to be.

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF K. W.

In this little album
I was asked to write
Something that will help to
Make its pages bright.

Now my sweet wee maiden
In this pretty book,
All your friends are asking,
“May I have a look?”

“Yes,” I hear you answer
Like a little sage,
“You may have a peep now
If you’ll fill a page.

“You can press the harebell
And the violet sweet,
Or my friend the daisy,
Tiny, pure, and neat.

“Then each golden centre
With its dais raised,
Is a crown in miniature
Waiting to be praised.

“So, I love the daisy—
Fill a page with care—
They are like the eyes of God
Looking everywhere.”

WRITTEN IN A WINE HOUSE IN VIENNA

I'VE been in many countries,
And many cities seen,
And some were fair and beautiful,
But none so gay as "Veen";
The parks and buildings take the palm,
The ladies cheer my heart;
I dream of love, and mourn that I
Must from this sweetness part.

FRAGMENT

Written on a post card on the top of the Drachenfel Mountains, known as
the "Seven Mountains of Cologne"

HERE on the heights we quaff the golden wine,
Feast on romance, and view the swiftly flowing Rhine,
Muse on the time when love and life were young,
And almost wish the old, old tale had been unsung.

WRITTEN IN THE VISITORS' BOOK AT
BELLOCHANTUY HOTEL

IF jaded, worn with toil and strife,
And tired as tired can be,
Take boat at once, make straight away
For dear old Bellochantuy.

There watch the sun sink in the west,
Away far out at sea,
And see the mighty billows roll
Ashore at Bellochantuy.

Here you may read the whole day long,
But not from printed books,
From ev'ry wave and rock and cave
The Great Creator looks.

And if at times the day be wet,
And nought but mist you see,
The creamy scones and beaming smiles
Are still at Bellochantuy.

If e'er again I need repose,
And would from care be free,
I'll pack my bag and hie away
To lonely Bellochantuy.

WRITTEN ON A POST CARD IN CASTLE CAMPBELL
GLEN

IN dear old Castle Campbell Glen,
Far from the haunts of busy men,
Perched on the top of this old tower
Our minds go back to shady bower;
A blushing maiden, now a wife,
Three little ones to bless thy life,
Besides a husband good and true,
Such happiness is given to few,
With other friends now far away
Who think of thee this July day.

GOETHE

While in Leipzic with Mr G—— we visited Auberbach's Cellar,
which Goethe used to frequent. The following lines were
written over our names in the Visitors' Book.

WE cannot live when Goethe held the spell
Of poesy, but lo! he still doth dwell
In this old cellar, then imbibe the sparkling wine,
And all the power that once was his will now be thine.

WRITTEN IN THE BIRTHDAY BOOKS OF MY CHILDREN

BESSIE'S

STEP by step life's ladder rises,
Reaching upwards to the sky;
May I plant each footstep firmly,
Never falt'ring as I try;
Steady climbing while I can
At the top to find a man.

* * * *

WILLIE'S

Could I retrace my steps to-day,
I would not wish to change the way;
I'd wisely try to mend the road,
And nearer be to truth and God.

* * * *

AGNES'

When the century is run,
Half to me will then be done,
May I improve each year I see,
Whate'er remains of life to me.

* * * *

JENNY'S

Child of my muse, I give to thee
This thought, incentive may it be;
Good deeds I oftentimes wish to do
Neglected are for something new,
Yet when this clay is laid at rest,
May it be said: "He did his best."

FRANCES'

When time with me is ended,
Rolled up as in a scroll,
May truth then be—new proof to me—
In life itself extended,
As I had apprehended
Continued in the soul,
When NOW and THEN are blended
Two portions of a whole.

TELEGRAM TO A FRIEND ON HIS WEDDING DAY

O MYSTIC tie, two hearts made one,
The golden chain of life begun,
May all the bliss of earth and heaven
With every link anew be given;
Thus love shall reign supreme and be
A passport to eternity.

REPLY TO R. B. M.

DEAR frien', your note reached me in course,
Its guid news pleased me weel,
A tear would start the while I read,
And awkward made me feel.

Ye say my composition's guid,
Wi' grit in every line,
An' rhythm coursin' like a burn
Owre stanes an' chuckies fine.

I thank ye, frien', wi' a' my heart
For criticism sae keen,
When lines would halt in days gane by
And fau'ts could aye be seen.

No' that I think I'm perfect noo,
Forbid I should gie heed,
To dream o' this, if possible,
Would brand me as a weed.

Ye mayna hae the gift o' sang,
But oh! ye hae the heart
That's ever lippin' fu' wi' love,
Whilk is the better part.

INSCRIBED ON THE FLY-LEAF OF "SEEN AND
UNSEEN," BY E. KATHERINE BATES

SILENCE sometimes makes us ponder
On the life that's over yonder;
Picture we, without the veil,
Life—a ship with all its sail
At the mercy of the wind
Leaving not a track behind;
Rudderless and tempest-tossed,
Dashed, at last, on rocky coast.

'Tis not so with man, for he
On a deep and trackless sea
Has a hope and faith that knows,
With the open mind it grows
From a seed within the soul
Reaching forth to higher goal;
This we know, and know not how,
But its greatness we avow,
And believe, in days to come
Unity will be the sum.

Nature shows it everywhere
If we scrutinise with care,
And to spirit self be true,
Other evidence pursue;
Some you'll find within this book,
Give it more than passing look,
Psychic facts will make you ponder,
Turn a convert, or I'll wonder.

LINES ENCLOSED IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND

FIVE braw, hearty laddies ye've got,
An' ilk' ane ye thocht best o' the lot,
 But this lass bears the gree,
 And that ye will see,
Sae mark the event wi' a dot.

If her name should be Agnes or Jean,
O' your circle she's sure to be queen,
 The pride o' your hearts,
 For her wee sunny darts,
Will gie pleasure whaur'er they are seen.

I've five bonnie lassies mysel',
Maybe wives for your sons, wha can tell?
 An' my ae only boy,
 My pride an' my joy,
Micht a guid son-in-law be as well.

I'm prood o' the cause o' this rhyme,
An' hope that it's no' the last time,
 For the muse is sae shy,
 When to coort her I try,
An occasion like this mak's her chime.

When this ye receive let me ken,
Hoo the mither an' wee lassie fen,
 For I wish them baith weel,
 An' my friendship I seal,
This day wi' the proodest o' men.

ON PRESENTING A SILVER SNUFF-BOX TO MR N—

'Tis love that prompts the tender thought,
And guides the kindly hand,
'Tis love that binds the hearts of all
As with a golden band.

Then ever let it reign supreme,
And all thy actions guide,
True happiness shall then be thine
Whatever may betide.

Now take this box from comrades true,
And often take a pinch,
'Twill help thee in the hour of need
Ne'er from the truth to flinch.

In all the fleeting years to come
They wish thee ev'ry joy,
Aspire to be a man, indeed
A man without alloy.

TO MRS S—, WHILE PAYING A PASSING VISIT

I FAIN would write a verse o' rhyme,
But lack the pow'r forby the time,
Yet in a word, I wish ye weel
Wi' routh o' wealth an' cosy biel'
To shield an' succour hungry men
Wha tarry here, they weel will fen.

IX
MISCELLANEOUS



THE PIOUS GROCER

ONE night o'er a pipe I was musing alone,
And trembled to think of the days that were gone,
When father had toiled for a grocer in town,
The pittance thus earned he obtained with a frown,
But dared not complain, for the grocer was keen,
Yet all the town knew he on Sundays was seen
As he stood by the plate at the great church door,
And bowed to the ladies that passed him before.

Now father had worked to the grocer for years,
And mother eked out, with her toil and her tears,
The paltry twelve shillings he got for his pay,
And while he lamented, he yet had to stay.
E'en now I can fancy I hear father tell
"Those mis'erable years all seemed like unto hell."
To find food for the bairns was a difficult job,
And to make the ends meet; it was sinful to rob
This great Nabob man who was hoarding his pile,
While he stood at the plate with a heavenly smile;
To smother his conscience he gave to the funds
The cash that belonged to the dear little ones;
E'en then, I remember, that often I thought
Is this father's share that he home now has brought
For work in the grocery, early and late?
Was this all his portion, or was it his fate?
The grocer I knew was as good as pure gold,
And one of the chosen within the church fold,
An elder, indeed, and no hypocrite he,
His hams and his cheese were the best that could be,

THE PIOUS GROCER

He stood at the plate, and it surely was right,
A good Christian man, whereas I was a mite.
I loved my good mother, and waited the while,
I witnessed her tears and I watched for her smile,
But oh! how I grieved her affliction to see,
And longed for the time when a man I would be;
I'd thought as a lad, I would then have the sense
To know how it was at my father's expense
This grocer grew rich, while my father was poor,
And rarely would enter within the church door,
Although he was gentle, forbearing, and kind,
But strange, to these virtues the grocer was blind;
And seldom we saw him except on the day
His master went into the church pew to pray.

At the mission you often the grocer could hear
Proclaim to the people the "Dear Lord was near;"
His zeal was so great, when the service was done
Away he would go, where a soul might be won,
When ah! I have seen my poor mother at night
Kneel down by the settle, and pray for the light
To guide and direct her, and point out the way
To carry her burden and brighten the day.

A reck'ning has come, for the grocer is dead,
No time was he given to die in his bed;
And over his grave in the churchyard is seen
A fine granite stone with this legend, I ween:
"He gave to the church, and he managed the school,"
For he was an elder, but some say a fool;
His doorstep was dirty, bespattered with mud,
And his clothes looked to me as if spotted with blood;
But now he is dead, his poor soul is away,
And charity claims we should judge not the clay,

THE PIOUS GROCER

His money all gone to the four winds of heaven,
Too late to repair the dear hearts that were riven.
But still there is room for all true men to grieve,
The poor we're to have, we are asked to believe;
If only we loved as the Master hath shown,
Injustice would cease, for the truth would be known.

A FRAGMENT

'Tis kittle work to woo the Muse,
Thro' devious ways she's oft obtuse,
Yet one will find responsive fire
A-kindling in the heart's desire,
And all the love the soul doth know
Will have a warmth, an afterglow;
Then all one's being is enthralled,
And tells the lover he is called,
And so must woo with tender grace,
With suppliant look and beaming face,
Then will she give responsive smile,
Divine reward for all his toil.

AT A COUNTRY KIRK TWENTY YEARS AGO

My guidwife had dressed the bairnies,
Then we dauner'd through the toon,
To the sma'est kirk that's in it,
Quately enter'd an' sat doon.

At this time nae settled preacher
Brak' the bread in this wee kirk,
So this day a perfect striplin'
Bellowed like a very stirk.

A' preliminaries ended,
In the text that he gi'ed oot
Were the words, "the one thing needful"—
Quite a helpful theme, nae doot.

Aff he started at a tangent,
To us a' his tale to tell,
How that we his counsel needed
Being heirs direct o' Hell.

But he gaed aboot it queerly,
Us to show what Saint Luke meant,
An' that wi' this Gospel message
For oor guid he had been sent.

Then the range o' his oration,
Fairly took me by surprise,
Up the hill o' steep Parnassus,
Climbed he wi' uplifted eyes.

Frae oor English bard he quoted—
Byron—if you'd heard him roar,
“Fare thee well, and if for ever,”
You would ne'er hae scribbled more.

Next frae Rabbie! honest Rabbie!
Here his voice hooever fell,
'Bout the Banks o' Doon an' thorn he
Left wi' maid in shady dell.

Then again he turned to tell us
That the “needful” was “believe,”
Such belief as I hae met wi'
Passes thro' a gey wide sieve.

Surely it is awfu' nonsense
That in fire wi' brimstone burned,
Men will be wha dinna credit
That a heaven can be earned.

Mony Calvinistic sermons
I hae heard in days o' yore,
But in a dissentin' pulpit
Hadna heard the like before.

Men should know by inner witness
No' to preach till they are called,
Only then will they discover
They can gather to the fauld.

It appears to be a business
Some tak' up like ony trade,
What a blessin' man's no' master
For nae progress would be made.

What we want is honest dealin',
Sweated labour ne'er to buy,
Nor oppress oor fellow-mortal
That's the teaching they should try.

Why should bairns at a' be hungry
When the world is fu' o' wealth?
Is there no' enough to feed them,
Gie them buits an' claes, an' health?

Then the "Needful" is, be honest!
Gie the labourin' man his due,
Then nae puir we'd hae among us,
This the "Needful," they'd find true.

For the road to heaven's portals
Ne'er is through a golden door,
Charity should ne'er be needful,
For nae man should e'er be poor.

God rewards a' honest giving
If a man has paid his way,
So beware He ne'er is cheated
Kennin' a' we dae or say.

Wrang we neither man nor woman,
Never leave the pricklin' thorn,
Never dae in dark or moonlicht
What we'd blush for on the morn.

SUGGESTED BY A PARODY ON EDGAR ALLAN
POE'S "RAVEN"

ONCE in winter, black December,
I was squatted by the fender,
Where I often did my reading,
Or a little bit of "weeding,"
O'er a pipe of brown tobacco I had smoked so oft before.

Starting sudden—was I dreaming?—
Someone crying—someone screaming—
Struck my ear; I had been sleeping,
Yet the cry still kept repeating;
Jumping up, I to the casement rushed across the parlour
floor.

There along the street parading,
Like a fool a-masquerading,
Was a dirty-looking moulder,
Rumbling, tumbling, like a boulder,
Cursing, swearing he would kill her if she came outside
the door.

But I thought about the screaming,
"No, I'm sure I was not dreaming,
I shall go," and off I started,
And I found a broken-hearted,
Poor, bedraggled-looking creature bleeding on her
kitchen floor.

A PARODY ON EDGAR ALLAN POE'S "RAVEN"

All her crime, she had been seeking,
Only what would meet housekeeping,
When he struck her with a bottle,
Then attempted her to throttle,
But a minute or two longer she would not have needed
more.

And the children, too, were screaming,
Certain now I was not dreaming,
Round their mother, tugging, crying,
"Speak, oh! tell us, are you dying?"
And a crowd of neighbours bending o'er her, till my
heart was sore.

Looking round the room, and thinking
This the dire result of drinking,
I determined I should never
Let it cross my lips, or ever
Stop my tongue from advocating total abst'nence more
and more.

Two policemen took him, linking,
To the office without shrinking,
Locked him in a cell to gather
Time to think he was a father,
And to realise when sober he was cruel to the core.

If the court upon the morrow
Made him learn, unto his sorrow,
He must suffer for carousing,
Pay the piper for his boosing,
His poor wife and helpless children might have
something to the fore.

A PARODY ON EDGAR ALLAN POE'S "RAVEN"

Punish would I men for drinking,
Dodging, scheming, duty shrinking,
Add the lash without compunction—
I, myself, would take the function—
This I think would be sufficient dormant senses to
restore.

I remember that the Bailie
In this case gave ten days, really;
If he'd shot a single rabbit,
Or a salmon had he grabbit,
Three months hard had been his portion—that at least,
and maybe more.

Deeds like these are dreadful! awful!
And in every sense unlawful!
But to batter a poor creature,
And disfigure every feature—
This you may do, and then leave her, bruised and
weltering in her gore.

Turned I homeward, I remember,
To my place beside the fender,
Inwardly I cursed this evil!
Essense of the very devil!
Wishing hard that men would know it, and
discard Drink evermore.

A SEASIDE REVERIE

THE morn was calm, 'twas "First day," when
I thocht on a' the creeds o' men,
Then worshipped in a but an' ben *
 Beside the sea;
An' heard the truth that a' should ken,
 Withoot a fee.

To watch the fast receding tide,
As on its bosom far an' wide
The stately ships seem to abide
 Still and alone;
But ah! return at eventide,
 And they are gone.

Behold the waves that kiss the beach,
Whose ebb and flow for ever teach;
This is the way of God to preach,
 Since time began;
Eternal Truths withoot the speech
 Of errin' man.

Oot in the bay a warnin' bell,
Rings day an' nicht like funeral knell,
Up frae the waves it comes to tell
 O' danger near;
Then sinks, doon, doon, as into Hell,
 To disappear.

* A Friends' Meeting.

A SEASIDE REVERIE

Not so the light on Holy Isle,
The sailors note full many a mile,
Returnin' frae their deep sea toil,
 Ere morn appears;
Its cheery rays aye mak' them smile,
 An' calm their fears.

Wi' life's tempestuous voyage past,
Oor sails made taut, an' anchor cast,
Within the Haven safe at last,
 Wi' a' the crew;
What joy to ken, before the mast
 Ilk' ane was true.

A WOMAN'S HOPE

I THINK with a sigh of the days gone by,
And I ask what is in store?
Yet my hopes run high as the mountains nigh.
And my heart is cheered once more.

I look ahead, although nothing was said,
But then, silence is divine,
And I rub my han's and think of the banns,
And I feel; ah! this is fine.

BICYCLE SONG

O GIVE to me my bicycle,
And let me mount it now,
My feet upon the treadle pads,
I'll climb the mountain's brow.

Then rushing down the hilly steep,
My hands upon the bar,
There's not a sport in all the land
Can equal it by far.

Or spin along the level plain
With spirits light and free,
Let others ride a horse or car—
The bicycle for me.

'Tis good for casting off the bile,
Will ease rheumatic pain,
And if by chance you catch a cold,
It throws it off again.

Take my advice, invest in one,
'Twill suit you to a tee,
No medicine nor the doctor's bills—
Just try yourself and see.

When you're oppressed with heavy work,
Find business is a load,
Just don your knickers, mount the wheel,
And spin along the road.

BICYCLE SONG

A run of fifteen miles or so
Will make you take your food;
I'll guarantee you'll then exclaim:
"Now really this is good!"

No need for you to double up,
As scorchers sometimes do,
But sit erect, and you will find
That all I claim is true.

Then give to me my bicycle,
And let me mount it now,
My feet upon the treadle pads,
And I will show you how.

TELEGRAM SENT TO A FRIEND, FROM KESWICK, CUMBERLAND

AN Autumn day in beauty clad,
The queen of weather we have had,
E'en Scotia's scenes before thee pale,
O lovely Grasmere hill and dale;
Here could I live, here would I die,
From here transport my soul on high

OUR TAM'S WADDIN'

OUR Tammas is a burly chiel,
An' likes a coag o' parritch weel,
Can loup a fence, or brae can speil,
Wi' ony in the country.

He took the thocht he'd get a wife,
To cheer an' comfort him thro' life,
An' for this purpose crossed to Fife,
Ae dark day in December.

The sea was in an' awfu' rage,
Jist like a wild beast in a cage,
The Forth, ye ken, is like a wedge
'Tween Granton and Kirkcaldy.

Puir Tam! he got an awfu' fricht,
An' cried, "Will we ootlive this nicht?
I'm feared I'll nae mair get a sicht
O' Mary an' Kirkcaldy."

The tempest roared, the sea ran high,
E'en some on board prepared to die,
Tam clasped his hands, an' heaved a sigh,
An' bitterly cried, "Mary."

The storm sune lulled, they reached the pier
Wi' shout o' joy, dried ilka tear;
Tam's only thocht was, Mary dear,
That nicht in lang Kirkcaldy.

OUR TAM'S WADDIN'

He, cauld an' drippin', reached the door
He'd thocht he never would see more—
An', faintin', fell doon on the floor,
Fast clasped wi' his dear Mary.

The news like fire spread thro' the toon,
This brocht a crood o' bairnies roun';
To see oor Tam get sic a boon—
A wife frae lang Kirkcaldy.

The minister arrived at last,
An' tied the knot, nae doot 'tis fast,
Jist like a culprit to a mast,
That nicht in lang Kirkcaldy.

Tam swears he'll ne'er forget the day
He started on his wedded way,
An' we a' hope he ever may
A guid wife find in Mary.

THE MAID OF BELLOCHANTUY

"JESSIE the flower of dear Dunblane"
Is sung with mirth and glee;
But I ask myself if the poet was sane,
Or ever at Bellochantuy.

For a maid is there with a love as strong
As the rocks by the rugged shore,
Who will give to man all the road along
A heart that is true to the core.

BABY

BABY'S eyelids blinking, blinking,
Baby's blue eyes, twinkling, twinkling,
Like the stars around, above,
Scintillating shafts of love,
Gathered from behind the stars
Thence to earth in ether cars;
Bring they life to Baby's eyes,
Blessèd treasure from the skies;

“I am spirit, this is me,
Look into mine eyes and see,
For behind them I am thinking
This is why mine eyes are blinking,
Tho' I may be, Baby, Baby.”

Baby, sunbeam, shining, shining,
Morning, noon, and night reclining,
Helpless, needing mother's care;
But before, ah! where? ah! where?
Now on earth with eyes to shine.

“Wonder! father, mother, mine,
I have brought these eyes of blue
From the skies to give to you,
Pouting mouth, and nose as well”—
This is Baby's way to tell—
“And my little forehead shining,
While I'm on your breast reclining,
I am Baby, maybe, maybe?”

BABY

Baby's language now is "gooing,"
Perfect is her way of wooing—
Open hands with fingers neat,
Kicking with her tiny feet
That some day will romp and run
In the rain and in the sun;
Every day we now shall see
Something that we owe to thee;
So we bless thee, Baby dear,
For the comfort and the cheer
Thou hast brought us with thy "gooing"
And thy subtle way of wooing,
Like a lady, Baby, Baby.

A WISH

EVERY joy and every blessing
May the future for you keep,
All the pathway strewn with roses
Wheresoe'er you plant your feet.

A BABY'S VICTORY

BABY buntin, tottlet-lottle,
Joy to see thee with thy bottle,
Now a pause, and then a smile,
To thy dear grandma, the while
Mother's head is in a whirl.
Father says, "My own wee girl,"
Then grandpa philosophises,
Thus declares how life arises;
First a Theosophic thought
From behind Creation brought,
God and life alike are one,
Parts of an infinite sun,
Giving off its rays of light
Till the universe is bright;
With the radiance of its beams
Universal Nature teems,
Little cherub now has come,
Life and love united hum
Round our hearts, and we are bound,
Willing slaves by baby found,
Like a flower to bloom and be
Perfected humanity.

Baby, fount of life outpouring,
We are all in joy devouring,
For thou art Creation's prize,
Binding fast affection's ties
With the golden cords of Heaven
That are first to babies given;

A BABY'S VICTORY

This we feel, and know how true
Every baby brings anew
Occult power we may not scan,
But we must not, dare not ban
Innocence so pure and sweet,
Light and love in thee complete.
Image of th' Incarnate One,
Down to earth from off the throne,
With a smile our hearts to win,
And to teach us, what is sin;
For we know thy life is pure,
And thy little footprints sure,
So in joy we follow on,
Back with thee to heaven's throne.
Ah! behold we pause and see
This is baby's victory.

MICHAEL BRUCE

Written in the Visitors' Book in the Cottage where Michael Bruce
was born in Kinneswood,

WE come not here, dear Michael Bruce,
In coat of mail to offer truce,
But homage pay to thy fair name,
And to acknowledge all thy claim
As songster to the Spring, and see
Thy birthplace, and perchance to be
In spirit with thee all the way
Through life, and at the close of day
Enjoy with thee eternity.

A BABY'S SMILE

IN the golden hours of dawn,
When your loved ones round you fawn,
 And would share
In your trials and your pain,
With their sympathy you gain
 Lesser care.
For beside you all the while
There's a dear wee baby's smile
 Fills the air;
I can feel it bright and free
Come in wavelets o'er the sea
 To my chair,
Where I sit and think of you,
Till my soul responds anew,
 For I share
In the smile so pure and sweet,
While it guides your wayward feet
 From despair.
Now the future will be bright,
After darkness comes the light
 With a glare!
So take courage, gentle one,
Hope is like a beacon sun
 Everywhere.
When the shades of evening fall,
Take your pen and tell me all,
 Lady fair.

DAY AND NIGHT : A REVERIE

THE sun is setting in the west,
A calmness fills the air,
And Nature with night robes is dressed,
Yet all is passing fair.

No ripple on the waters deep,
No singing birds to cheer,
The trees and flowers seem fast asleep,
Proclaiming night is here.

I heard the lark's glad song of joy,
The linnet's on the thorn,
The wood-dove's sweet "coo-roo" so coy,
Proclaiming it was morn.

I heard the maiden's song of love,
While turning o'er the hay:
And saw the dazzling sun above
Proclaiming it was day.

I saw the lark go seek its nest,
The wood-dove seek the bough:
I cannot scan the mountain's crest,
For darkness crowns its brow.

Now all around is hushed and still,
No sun to give us light,
A silence reigns o'er vale and hill—
Ah! truly, this is night.

But far beyond yon twinkling star
Nor eye nor mind can scan,
Serene in beauty, throned afar,
The blessed home of man.

INSCRIBED IN VISITORS' BOOK, BURNS' COTTAGE

AND was it here, in this wee cot,
The great immortal saw the light?
From here went forth the noble bard
To climb Parnassus' giddy height?

O spirit of immortal Rob,
Come dwell within another heart!
That I may sing in humble praise
The glories of thy noble art.

Fain would I linger by the scene,
And woo the Muse with thee awhile,
With gentle touch attune the lyre
That thou didst with true art beguile.

A WINTER SCENE IN DYSART

A SMOKING room in Dysart's ancient hall,
A window pane like picture on a wall,
Two stately spreading trees with branches bare,
These formed the foreground of a painting rare.
Beyond; the sea in wondrous deep blue tint
That shimmered dreamily, anon the glint
Of sun; I marked the wavelets fall and rise,
Then sparkle as a nameless maiden's eyes
Of blue, while wistfully the distant sea
Merged with the mist and eerie looked to me.
Dear maiden go, survey the lovely scene,
Where Nature with artistic touch hath been,
Then turn thine eyes within, thine ego trace,
And thou wilt shine with all thy native grace.

WRITTEN ON THE FLY-LEAF OF A "WHERE-IS-IT"
BOOK

WHERE is it? echo answers, where?
You need not gaze, it is not there,
But here, within this little book,
Knowledge is gained by ev'ry look;
Both facts and figures you will find,
To help the sale and store the mind,
That granary of good and ill,
From which we take just what we will;
Then see your grain is golden bright,
So will your deeds add to your might,
For like a mirror they reflect,
Show to our credit or neglect;
With this in view you will advance
The nation's welfare, and enhance
Your value as a salesman rare
By always acting on the square;
Here's your reward, a conscience free,
An upright man you'll ever be.

HE MADE A DESERT SMILE

Written in the Visitors' Book in the Shrewsbury Hotel, Alton, on returning from a visit to Alton Towers and Garden—the seat of the Earl of Shrewsbury.

(There is in the Garden a monument erected to the memory of the man who laid out the grounds, round the frieze of which is inscribed the legend, "He made a Desert Smile.")

It certainly was worth our while
To come to see "a desert smile;"
If Paradise were half so fair,
No wonder, then, that love was there;
My soul was filled with rapture through,
To see such cedars, beech, and yew,
And golden gates that number seven,
Might almost be the gates to heaven.

ENCLOSED IN A VOLUME OF BURNS' POEMS, SENT
TO W. S., NUREMBERG

I think of thee and Nuremberg,
Its streets and lanes
And holy fanes,
Its cannon towers,
And gates and flowers,
The ancient moat
On which I dote,
And fountains grand,
The singing band
Of long ago,
All these you know
Delighted me in Nuremberg.

The atmosphere of Nuremberg,
Dürer, Kranach,
Memling, Kaulbach,
Kraft and Holbein,
And Schaufelein,
Vischer and Stoss,
In Church and Schloss,
Hans Sachs, Behaim,
With Luther's fame,
And all the rest,
Artists the best
Who famous made old Nuremberg.

TO W. S., NUREMBERG

There's more than gold in Nuremberg,
They have a well,
And sages tell
There truth is found,
Deep in the ground;
But should we go,
Down, down below?
When from the top,
With eyes to cope,
You there will find
Food for the mind—
'Tis plentiful in Nuremberg.

Farewell! thou quaint old Nuremberg,
In mystic sight,
I give to-night,
Thy cobbler bard,
A Scot's regard,
In halting rhyme;
Perchance its chime,
With "Lorenz" bells,
In Heaven tells
That I must be,
Ye gods, to see,
Again the sights of Nuremberg.

TO A LADY ABOUT TO BE MARRIED

MAY He who honoured wedded life
Attend through all the years to come,
And bless thy choice, and thee a wife,
The centre of a happy home.

ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT McKINLEY

COLUMBIA mourns, and we are sad to-day!
For comes the message o'er the vasty deep:
"The President is dead; the people weep,"
And all true men are silent in dismay,
That vile assassin could be led astray
To satiate a hatred, fame to reap—
A devil's fame, forsooth!

I charge thee keep
Thy calm, Columbia, for none can stay
Thine onward march; our hearts go out to thee;
For thy McKinley was our kith and kin,
To raise thy people was his lofty aim,
By kindly deeds he strove this goal to win,
And thus attained a great, a lasting fame
In strength of truth that made thy country free.

* * * * *

VICE - PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT STEPS INTO THE BREACH

Roosevelt, unflinching, marched with manly tread
Into the breach, and calmed the people's fears;
The nation marvelled as it dried its tears;
Great is a people who can thus be led,
And great is he of whom it hath been said,
He gave decision spite of mocking jeers;
A telegram he sent to pioneers
Who, for their country's cause had fought and bled,
"Why should a mother sigh, and break her heart
When she hath given the very best she had?"
An only son, perchance a favourite lad.
"The poor, as well as rich, have done their part,"
Trust Roosevelt, then, he hath the grip of steel,
With head to guide him, and a heart to feel!

INNSBRUCK

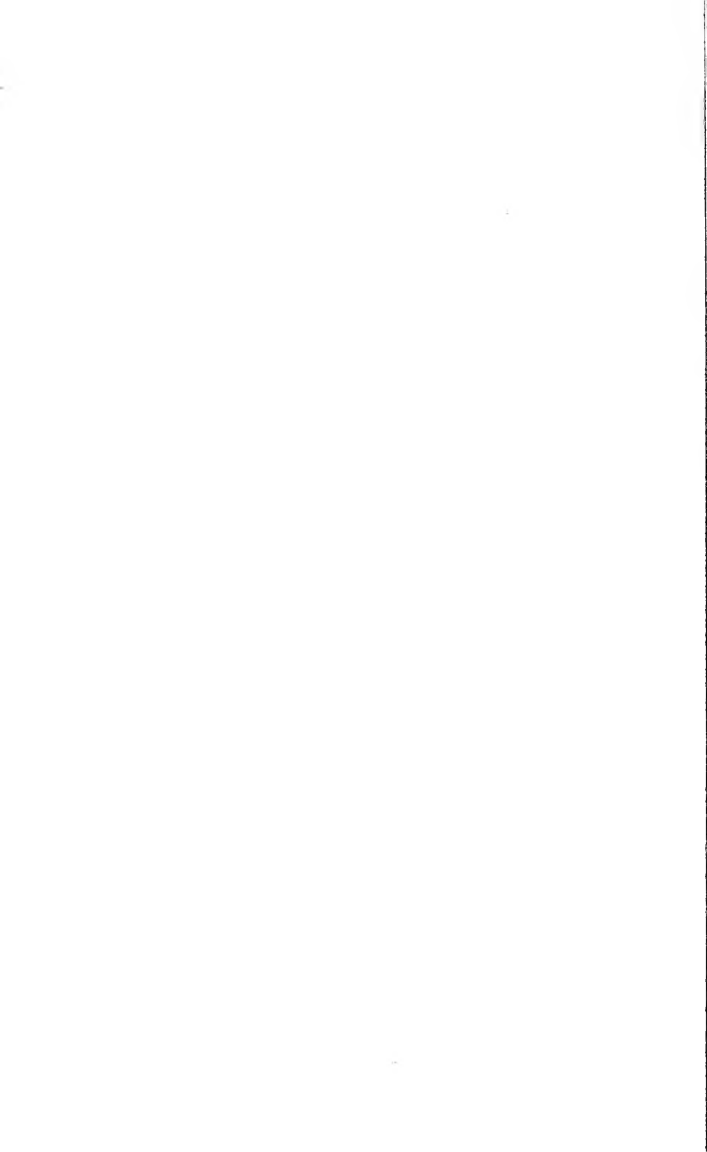
IN all my wanderings, Innsbruck, the palm is thine,
Nature in thee hath made a holy shrine;
I watched the sun o'er craggy mountain rise,
And asked in awe, "Is this not Paradise?"

TO AN EXILE

WHEN far from auld Scotland, the land of your birth—
The home of your fathers, of childhood and mirth—
May you cherish the thought, that the home of the free
Is wherever a brother may happen to be,
That the favour of heaven is given to none,
But alike smiles on all as if all were as one.

NATURE'S CHURCH

THE bells are ringing,
The birds are singing,
The children are off to the church to-day;
My soul is easy,
My mind is breezy,
I'll hie me off to the hills away,
Where winds are blowing,
And streamlets flowing,
Down from the mountains of God to-day.



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